

son
ow
Mans whole Duty,
A N D
Gods wonderful Intreaty
Of him thereunto.

Set forth from 2 Cor. 5. 20. and
Published at the Request of some
Hearers.

By DANIEL BURGESS,
Minister of the Word of Reconciliation.

Licensed according to Order.

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Man's whole Duty

AND

God's wonderful Mercy

Of the Christian

See the Christian's Duty
in the World of the
Heaven

By David
Minister of the Word of Reconciliation

Printed according to the

Printed by
at the Sign of the
in the Year 1700

To my Excellent Friends,
Mrs. Joan Wood.
Mrs. Anne Hook.
Mrs. Abigail Vanittern.
Mrs. Martha Brown.

OF THE
CITY
OF
BRISTOL.

Gentlewomen,

T Hese Lines do not vainly
design to adorn your
Names ; but are very uprightly
meant to defend my own, from

The Epistle

one of the blackest Reproaches. Even loathsome Ingratitude. I have bid them tell all they meet, that You were, for some (black) years together, my noblest Gaia's; And your Houses, my sweet Homes. That I am not Unthankful, though I am Insolvent. That I am not Insolvent neither, if Prayers do discharge Debts.

I do continue my pleasant Hope of your Persons Reconciliation unto God : And my Prayers for your Dearest Relatives : Beseeching the Father of Glory, to make his own Love, the Reward of Yours unto me. And if it be his blessed pleasure, to make these very Leaves bear some Fruit unto your Souls. Be

Dedicatory.

Be it freely said, as far as I know my self, I am neither Proud nor Ashamed of them. Not Proud ; for I am aware how my imperfections do Blemish them. Not Ashamed ; for I am told, God hath Blessed them ; and I am made to believe, that he will Bless them. That as they are not Beautiful, so neither shall they be Barren, as Rachel. But Fruitful, though Blear-Eyed as Leah.

I have told you some Years ago, that I Preached for the Salvation of Plow-Boys and Milk-Maids, as well as Lords and Ladies. And if I did not, I should never expect to do so much upon them by Rhetorical Politeness,

The Epistle Dedicatory.

ness; as by Gospel Plainness.
Honey Dews be sweet to the Taste,
but they miserably blast the Corn.
Delights of Fancy, hinder
Wounds of Heart. This is
still my Thought.

And if you are still the Christians that I once knew you, I am sure you will welcome Plainest Gospel. 'Tis Gospel I do present you, and in Dress as homely as I heretofore used among you. I am not now first to crave a Blessing upon it; but shall ever continue craving it: And particularly a Blessing to your selves, and to the Olive-Plants about your Tables.

Clare-House, in
Drury-Lane, London,
Dec. 11. 1689.

Your Affectionate Orator un-
to your Heavenly Father.

D. Burgess.

*Man's whole Duty, and
God's wonderful Intrea-
ty of him thereunto.*

II COR. V. 20.

Be ye Reconciled to God.

OUR *Being* is our least and lowest Honour and Pleasure. The end of all Essence, is *Action*. But neither is that its own End, or our Perfection. Action, is for the advancement of our Being; as our Being is for our employment in Action. Work designs *Reward*; and that together perfecteth our Action and Being. The Reward that doth

A. 4.

this

this, is the Jewel inestimable ;
 which should be bought at any
 rate, but sold at none. And this,
 whether blind men see it or no,
 is *Love*.

I am sure, *Divels and Damned
 ghosts* do feel it. They are weary
 of their Beings ; and have no
 Action but in unallayed torments ;
 because they neither Love nor are
 Loved. They are still uneasy,
 and in degrees of pain proporti-
 oned to their Enmity. *Holy An-
 gels and the Spirits of the Just* above,
 do also feel it. Their Essence and
 Action are as sweet as they wish ;
 because their Love is as great as
 they can desire. Their Love is an
 Ocean, and therefore is their Joy
 not a drop less. *This middle Worlds
 Inhabitants*, as far as they have
 their Senses, do feel it too. The
dead in sin, do prefer their impu-
 rest Loves above their Lives. And
 all that are *alive unto God*, do set
 their

their Seals unto that Glorious Truth, and most memorable : *He that dwelleth in Love dwelleth in God, and God in him.* 1 Jo. 4. 16.

With profoundest Reverence be it writ and read ! *The Divine Blessedness it self, which hath no limits, doth consist in Love.* The Persons of the Glorious Trinity are blessed infinitely. Their Being and Working are as much *sweeter* unto them, as they are *greater* then any Creatures. And this, because they Love and are Beloved mutually, no less then infinitely. Were their Love of each other but finite, their Delight and Pleasure must be as imperfect. The reason is most plain; Loving and being Loved, is all the Pleasure of an intelligent Nature.

Wherefore to seek our Happiness any where but in Love, its very Element ; is to leave the Waters and go fish in the Woods. And to doubt whether we shall find Fe-

licity in Love, is to make a question, whether when we come to Sea, we shall find any Water there?

I am by sad Experience cured of my hasty Confidence, as truly as ever great *Melanchton* was. Nor do I presume I shall win all my Readers of this Essay. I expect not to take and hold all the *Fish* that come to this *Gospel-net* it self: But I must have leave to say, I do expect a very good *Draught*. For I shall propose a word, that will cost Men hard service to resist. You that are *farthest from the Kingdom of God*, will have much ado to get away Unconvert: And you that stand *nigher*, must fight with all your might and main, if you be not led captive to Christ this time. So extraordinary a portion of Holy Scripture, is that which I here offer. A *Text* call it if you please. I do account it, and call it, *all the Bible*

(5)
Bible in eight Syllables. The sum
and substance of all God thinks fit
to Speak, and that we need to
Hear.

Three things are obvious in it.

1. *Mans miserable condition.* He
is an Enemy to God. He could not
otherwise be advised to Reconcile-
ment.

2. *Gods merciful Condescension.*
To Prepare and Offer a Reconcili-
ation : Yea, and beseech our Ac-
ception of it.

3. *Mans dutiful Religion.* No
hard task, nothing of brick and
bondage : Only to be friends and
Reconciled to God.

Or, if you like, see you now,
and never look off again while you
live ; see here two particulars.

(1.) *The Richest Feast that Grace
it self can prepare.* Very Reconcili-
ation unto God.

(2.) *The*

(2.) *The Sweetest Invitation that it can make unto the same. Even Obsecration and Intreaty, by Ministers, by Christ, and by the blessed God. By King, Prince and Embassadors.*

Now close your Ears, if you can, against this Doctrine.

Reconciliation to God is the whole Duty of Man, and sinful Man is intreated thereto by God.

The Heads of Discourse that offer themselves are,

I. *Mans Duty.* Of which, in our *Doctrinal* part.

II. *Gods Intreaty.* Of which, in our *Application.*

The first shall have its *Explication* in five orderly Positions; And its *Proof*, by as many demonstrative

(7)
tive Arguments, as shall appear
needful.

Position 1. *God and Man were
once entire Friends. Likeness to
God, qualified for such Friendship.
And Gods blessed Love, both ne-
cessarily and freely followed that
likeness. Till Sin entred, Man was
as like to God, as God willed : And
as dear to God, as he himself could
will or wish. For, as to Relation,
he was made his Son ; Luk. 3. 38.
As to Portion, God gave him all
things ; Psal. 8. 6. As for Tenure,
he held all by Covenant ; and was
sure to lose nothing till he should
sin it away ; Gen 2. 17. As for
Covenant, he had it sign'd and seal'd.
The Trees of Life and of Know-
ledge were Sacramental ; Gen. 2. 9.
And as to Communion, doubtless
that was great between God and
Adam ; till Adam made himself a
fugitive, and God made him an
exile. For ought we know, it was
not*

not much less between God and Adam in Paradise, then between God and Angels. Large Minds have thought, the sin of the Angels, was their Envy at the Honour by God given unto Man. While Man was himself, without all peradventure he would rather have been annihilated, then consented to *one* vain thought. And as soon have chosen to live in a boyling Cauldron of Oyl, as any course of sin. But,

Pos. 2. Sin made God and Man extreme Enemies. At one blow it destroy'd, the Likeness, the Love, the Relation, the Portion, the Covenant, the Communion aforesaid. Of Father and Son, it made them as Fire and Water. Contrary to each other: ~~Justice~~ Justice armed God against Man, and Malice enraged Man against God. Righteously, God cursed Man; and no doubt but Man bitterly, cursed and blasphemed God. Had not our Redeemer

deemer interposed, God would have assoon embraced a *Divel* as a *Man*. And before *Christ* was preached unto *Adam*, I question not, but he wish'd the destruction of his Creator. In a word ; The Scriptures declare God, and every unconvert Man, while such, at open war, and at utmost enmity. Before that *Abels* be converted, God does hate them ; and more then *Cains* do hate them afterward. Neither doth any *Cain* hate his Brother, as they hate their Maker. No Souls do near so much hate their Neighbours, as all Unregenerate ones do hate their God. Lamentable truth ! Till *Christ* makes the blessed Peace, God and Men wage the worst War. And there's no more concord between God and Men, then between God and Devils.

Pos. 3. *God and Man cease not to be Enemies, till they both return to be*

be entire Friends again. Friendship
 is mutual Love. 'Tis but *Love*, not
Friendship, where both parties do
 not Love. *Enmity* also, is mutual
Hatred. Nor is it *Enmity*, but *Ha-*
tred only, when but one of the
 parties do hate. Accordingly, *Re-*
conciliation is mutual ; and cannot
 be said to be made, if both Ene-
 mies return not from their *Hatred*
 to *Love* : Yea, and unto that
 height and *very degree* of Love from
 whence they fell. A displaced Bone
 is not right set, if it be not brought
 again into the very place whence
 it was thrust ; nor will it ever be
 easie or comely. Reconciliation to
 God is not right, nor will it be sa-
 ving, without his *Condescention* to
 us, and our *Ascension* unto him,
 made as in the beginning. The
 things forenamed must be regained ;
 to wit, our *Likeness*, *Love*, *Rela-*
tion, *Portion*, *signed*, *sealed Cove-*
nant, and *Communion*. Reconcili-
 ation,

liation, is full Restoration.

Pos. 4. *Reconciliation between God and Man hath several memorable things relating to it.* It concerns those that desire any part and portion in it, to bear always in mind these things of it.

1. *Gods Purpose and Promise of it, from all Eternity.* Before the foundation of the World, God purposed to reconcile some Enemies; *Eph. 1. 4, 5.* Before the World began, he made a promise of the same unto his Son; *Tit. 1. 2.* To wit, in those Eternal Transactions that were between the *Father* and the *Son*, by their one *Eternal Spirit*. Whereof we read, *Prov. 8. 22.* to *32.* *Isa. 53. 10, 11, 12.* &c.

2. *Jesus Christs Purchase of it, at his Death.* The Holy Gospel certifies us, that Christ by his Death purchased Reconciliation for some sinners: *Paid the whole price for it, and procured that it should in Gods*
time

time be given forth unto them.

Rom. 5. 10. Heb. 1. 3. Col. 1. 14.

It has been said, that sin made God and Man extream Enemies. Let it be considered, that God could never *Purpose* or *Promise* a Reconciliation, but in a way consistent with the honour of his Government. And consequently, through a full *Satisfaction* made unto him, for all the Glory that our sin took from him: And a *Price* truly valuable paid unto him, for all the Favours bestown upon us. Now to make such Satisfaction, and to pay such Price, was infinitely above the power of any *meer* Creature. To invent it, was beyond the compass of finite understanding. To ask it, had been too insolent a boldness. To effect it, was most perfectly impossible. Dr. *Owens* *Diatribē de Justitia Vindictiv.* and Dr. *Bates* his *Harmony of the Attributes of God in our Redemption*; abun-

abundantly clear this. I say but this word or two.

A meer Creature could not possibly make and pay it, by *Doing* or *Suffering*. Not by *Doing* : For it can do nothing for God, but what it owes unto God. And if it could, yet it could not do so much, as would repay the Glory that sin robs God of : For *One, the least sin, takes more Glory from God in a minute, then all our Obedience would restore in our everlastingness.* Because our Obedience doth in no sort profit him ; and gives but little honour to him ; as preferring him but above poor Creatures themselves : But our sin, in many respects, doth reproach and injure him horribly, as to his manifestative Glory, casting an unmeasurable Contempt upon him ; as setting him with all his infinite Excellencies under every Creatures feet. Nextly ; not by *Suffering* : For a Creature cannot suffer

suffer *infinitely*, as sin deserves, but by suffering *endlessly*. Now if it so suffer, it must be alwayes *making*; it will not ever *have made* the satisfaction we speak of. It will be ever *paying* the price; but it will never *pay* the full payment. Alas, *it is certain, that Hell would have some end, if the Creatures own torment for a million of years could satisfy for one sin!*

Wherefore, it pleasing God to *purpose* the reconcilment of sinful Men unto himself; and there being a necessity it should be upon terms *Honourable* unto him, as well as *Beneficial* unto us; it pleased him to *purpose* and *promise* that it should be through his Incarnate Sons fore-said *purchase*, and meritorious *procurement*. God was in Christ, *reconciling* the World to himself; 2 Cor. 5. In Christ, as his Oblation for us, and as his Gift unto us. The Oblation that satisfied his Justice

stice for us ; the Gift that satisfied his Love unto us, (as a great hand expresseth it.) So *1 Tim. 2. 6.* He, Jesus Christ, gave himself a Ransom for all ; and *Coll. 1. 14.* We have Redemption through his Blood. A Mystery indeed ; the Mystery of Mysteries ; and which engageth unspeakably our regards of the next particular concerning this Reconciliation unto God : To wit,

3. *The Holy Ghosts proof of it.* For of Sinners reconciliation unto God ; we are ready to think the news *too good to be true.* To cry out, How can it be ? I, and when we are told, it is to be through a full satisfaction made by his Son ; and price invaluable paid by him. By him, who, though the *infinite God*, became a *finite Man* : Tho' Gods equal, became his *servant* : Though the *Blessed God*, yet was made a *Curse* for us : We cannot but persist asking, *How can these things*

things be ? It nothing repents me, that I have often said ; *We do now as much need to have the Spirit of God Live in us, as ever we did need the Son of God to Dye for us.* And as the Purchase of Reconciliation did require a Divine Person, the Proof of it doth require no less.

God deals with Man, as Man : In a way of Reason, suited unto his Reasonable Nature. Which cannot Believe any thing, without a Reason for Belief of it. Of all the great and marvellous things that God commands our Faith, he first giveth *sufficient grounds* for our Faith of them. Particularly, of his foresaid *Purpose* to reconcile Sinners, and of his Sons *Purchase* foresaid ; things of greatest *worth* and *weight* ; and of Concernment to as many as do need Reconciliation. Of these extraordinary things, God hath provided extraordinary *Proof*. Even

Even the Testimony of a Person, no less than the Father himself, for the Son. Of the Glorious Spirit, coessential and coequal with both. This Divine, Infallible Person, who cannot be deceiv'd himself, or deceive us; is sent by the Father and his Son, to certify us of the *Purpose* and the *Purchase* which we speak of. To inform us of both; to conquer and drive away the *Objections* of our Minds against both; to give us a certain kind of *presence* and *sight* of both. A *sight* sufficient to move our *Wills*, and make our *Hearts* to relye and rest upon both as really true. And to draw our *Affections* in necessary degrees; causing us to Love and long for the *possession* of the Reconcilement so *purposed*, and so *purchased*. And to over-rule our *Lives*; and make them nothing so much, as a course of *Contemplation*, *Prayer* and *Action*, for this said Reconciliation.

For

For, be it deeply considered ;
 The *Holy Ghost* is declared in
 the Word, to be sent for this
 end ; To be a *Witness* unto Jesus
 Christ, and an *Agent* for him.
 It would be very vain to object that
 the *Holy Spirit* was given under
 the *Old Testament* long before Je-
 sus Christ came to Reconcile us by
 his Death. For he was so upon
 Christs interposing as our Reconciler
 straight-way after sins entrance ;
 and that with respect to Christs fu-
 ture Oblation and Intercession for
 our Reconcilement. And then as
 for degrees, there is no comparison.
 The Spirit drop'd but Dews in the
Old Testament : In the New, he rain-
 ed down Showers. So that comparate-
 ly he is said not to be given till
 Christ was Glorified. He, our Re-
 deemer, comes into the World, and
 proclaims Gods Love unto us, and
 purpose to reconcile and save sinners.
 As also his own undertaking, (ac-
 cording

cording to a *contract* made between
 the *Father* and *himself*,) to effect
 that Reconciliation by his *Oblation*
 and *Intercession*. This, the guilty
 graceless World could not *believe* ;
 nor have the *patience* to hear, from
 the reputed Son of a Carpenter.
Jews as well as *Gentiles*, made light
 of it ; yea, rose in arms against it ;
 all, save a handful ; and those bet-
 ter taught by him, whom we are
 next to speak of. The Holy Spirit
 (as was agreed on between the *Di-*
vine Persons,) now cometh ; and
 what does he ? Why, he guides
 Souls into the *Understanding* and
Faith of all the Truth by Christ
 preach'd. He *Glorifies Jesus Christ* ;
 convinceth Unbelievers that Christ
 is no *Impostor*, but a *Glorious Per-*
son, come with a *Glorious Commis-*
sion, to pursue Gods *Glorious Pur-*
pose, and to make the *Glorious Pur-*
chase foresaid. He receiveth Christs
 Spiritual things, and shews them
 B unto

unto Men that could not see them before ; even his *Truth* and his *Grace*. He receiveth them from *Christ*, as the *Lord Treasurer* of them ; and shews them abroad, that it may be seen, *what they are*, and *in whose hand they are* : That *Glory* may be brought unto *Christ* : That he may be owned and honoured as the *Purchaser* of the *purposed* Reconciliation ; *Jo. 16. 13, 14, 15. &c.* This did the blessed Spirit effectually ; causing the Church in all Ages to exalt the *Father* as the Original *Purposer* ; the *Son*, as the Meritorious *Purchaser* ; the *Holy Ghost*, as the convincing *Proof-maker* of our Reconciliation. Without which Proof, no Soul had ever believed it, or found an Heart to look after a portion in it : Which is the next great Consideration concerning it. For, if God has *Purposed*, and *Christ* has *Purchased* Reconciliation ; and the *Holy Ghost* has

has *proved* it so fully, that there is no just place for the least doubt, but they have so done ; the very next thing to be looked after must be,

4. *The Sinners possession of it.* For whatever be the *proportion* of a good, it avails not me without *propriety*. Let this Reconciliation be thought, as it is in truth, a good no less than *infinite*. If it be not made *mine own* ; if I am not Reconciled ; the *sound* of its Doctrine is to me, but as the *speech* of Bread, to a Man starving for want of it : Or as *words* of a Pardon, to a Man going up the Ladder, when he hath it not.

O what *Pillows* do they sleep on, who lay their Eyes together without this Reconciliation attained ? One would think it should be more *easy* to rest on the points of swords and spears, then upon one thought of God unreconciled. I will say with my

dear, and now blessed Friend, Mr. *Richard Alleyn* of *Somerset-shire* : If all the *Kings* of the Earth would give me all they are worth ; I would not lie down on my bed any night with one sin *Unrepented*, and without some hope of God *Reconciled* to me ! But I return.

The Holy Spirit in his Word testifyeth, a *purpose* of *Reconciliation*, that is *Eternal* : As also a *Reconciliation* at the Death of *Jesus Christ*, that is *Fundamental*. But he doth as clearly deny any *actual Reconciliation*, before *Conversion* : Before our Understanding and sincere Consent unto the *Covenant of Grace*. How should Divine Wisdom throw the richest Pearl to the vilest Swine ? Or Holiness forgive and embrace Creatures contrary to it ? There is no Law above God, but God is a Law to himself : And though he can do what he will, he cannot will what is Unwise or Unholy.

holy. Elect, or not Elect, *he that believeth not on the Son, the wrath of God abideth on him.* Jo. 3. 36. *He that hath not the Son of God, (to wit, in Marriage-Covenant;) he hath not Life; (to wit, the Life of Peace with God, or of Hope from him, or of Holiness toward him.)* 1 Joh. 5. 12. In a word: Look at what time God *teacheth*, and you *learn*; at what time God *draws*, and you *run* after him; at what time you unfeignedly say, *Lord, I do rely on the promises, and I do consent to the demands of the Gospel-Covenant;* at that time, in that very punct of time, your Pardon is seal'd in Heaven. 'Tis published in the Gospel, and declared so to be. For you are told; *He that hath the Son of God hath Life;* 1 Joh. 5. 12. *There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus;* Rom. 8. 1. And being justified by Faith you have peace with God through our

Lord Jesus Christ ; Rom. 5. 1.

Come Reader, come take Eternal Life from these Lines ! Hold thy self not a minute longer in Hell-fire ; for Gods wrath is not a jod less. Down with my Book ; and down fall thou on thy Knees, and utter the few words, which will make God and thy Soul everlasting Friends. No longer dare to live Damned. Venture to strike the Gospel-Covenant, and be saved. Say to Jesus Christ ; *Lord, I will stay no longer, I am thine upon thy Gospel-terms for ever. From this instant to Eternity, I will be thine. Say to thy self ; Heart, bid an eternal adieu unto Unrighteousness, and unto trust in self-righteousness as satisfactory or meritory. Say unto vain Company ; Sirs, I take my leave of you ; I must travel no farther with you, that are not for the strait gate and narrow way. If you will not be Reconciled to God with me, I will not*
any

any longer fight against God with you.
But whither do I break?

Be it known unto every Reader,
this is Gospel : God is not Reconciled to us FOR our Repentance and Faith. The most penitent Believers, are but unprofitable servants unto him. But he is never to be Reconciled WITHOUT Repentance and Faith. Both are as necessary, as tho they were Meritory ; though they are infinitely far from it. Yea, and upon the first penitent and faithful consenting to the Gospel-Covenant, God and Sinners become as true Friends as God and Holy Angels. And as Eternally inseparable ones ; Rom. 8. 38, 39. 'Tis not to be denied or concealed : The grant of Peace is one thing, and the sense of it is another : And these two are separable. God may be Reconciled to a Covenant-servant of his for months and years, and the servant be in fear and doubt of it. Those

sins that hinder not Gods grant of Peace to us, do often hinder our sense and assurance of it. Wherefore, we are to consider another particular concerning Reconciliation : To wit,

5. *The Believers perswasion of it.* For, though Reconciliation be the greatest good ; though it be Eternally *purposed* for me, and by Christs Death *purchased* for me ; and be by the Holy Spirit *proved* to me, that it is for some *Purposed* and *Purchased*. Yea, though through Grace I am *possessed* of it, what then ? Until I know that I am possessed of it, I am but like a *Child in the Womb* : Living -indeed in a bag of water, but not knowing my own Life. I have a Life that is only in *degree* inferior to the Life of Angels : But yet I live in doubts and fears, that I am like unto Divels ; and that I shall lodge for ever in their unquenchable fire. Now be it carefully

fully heeded : The Holy Spirit who is given to *work* Grace in us, he is also given to *witness* Grace unto us ; and to *make us know the things that are freely given to us of God* ; 1 Cor. 2. 12. He is a free and sovereign Agent indeed ; and he works and witnesses (in them, in whom he worketh,) *as he pleaseth*. He giveth assurance of Peace with God, *as much as he pleaseth* ; and *as soon*, and *no more*, and *no sooner*, than he pleaseth ; 1 Cor. 12. 11. At the first Plantation of the Gospel-Church, he used together to *convert* Souls, and to *assure* them of their Reconciliation unto God. But now we see, he doth not ordinarily so do. And as commanded, 2 Pet. 2. 10. most Converts do give great diligence, before their *Election and Reconciliation are made sure*. I condemn the *Roman Synagogue*, that measures all Cloth by its own Ell ; and denyeth the attainableness of

B 5

that

that assurance, which they neither duly *seek*, or ever *attain*. Our Divines have confuted and shamed them so much, that there needs not any thing to be said unto their blasphemous Dreams. Let the desirous Reader see but that one most excellent Sermon of Mr. *Samuel Fairclough* on 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. in the Morning Lectures against Popery. The Churches of Christ do believe and teach, that the blessed Spirit doth *ordinarily*, sooner or later, witness unto true Converts their Reconciliation : And seal them to the day of Redemption.

And this, either *mediately* or *immediately*. *Immediately*, by a sort of *spiritual words* : Such as pass between God and the Blessed Spirits above. By these the Holy Ghost testifieth unto humble diligent Believers, that they are Gods Reconciled and Adopted Children. And when he doth so, he doth it with a
clearness

clearness and sweetness that carry their own evidence with them. For there is no Rule beyond it, by which it may be tryed, as there is no other visible, besides the Light it self, whereby you may try it; *Rom. 8. 16.* He is said therefore to witness with our Spirits, that we are the Children of God. And *Eph. 1. 13.* with *Eph. 4. 30.* He is said to seal us: But how so? Unless he doth set some print and stamp upon us, distinguishing our state and Relation. Again, *mediately* the Spirit perswadeth us also of our Reconciliation. To wit, by enabling us to see our Graces truth and sincerity; and from thence to infer our certain Reconciliation. Both wayes he is ordinarily the Comforter of sound Believers.

I have read of a Woman that would say, she had born eight or nine Children; and with as much pain as other Women used to undergo:

dergo : But she would be content to bear all that pain over again for this comfort of the Spirit. O that the same *mind* were in all that *pro- fess* a value of it ! But well ; what if you had sought and found it too ? There's another very material particular concerning Reconciliation to God, that would ask for your thoughts and cares : To wit,

6. *The practical improvement of it.* I mean of his *Reconciliation*, and of his *perswasion* or assurance of it. Hear the Apostle, 2 Cor. 7. 2. *Having these promises*, (to wit, of Reconciliation and all Grace, chap. 6. latter end ;) what use are we to make of them ? Why, *Let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.* q. d. " Let us live, as far as we can, " without sin. Let us do Gods will " on Earth as 'tis done in Heaven, " unto our utmost ability. Let us " do

“ do all we are able to make our
 “ Reconciliation more honourable
 “ to God then our Damnation
 “ would have been.

Assurance, is a special *priviledge*.
 Scarce *any* Childs portion, at all
 times. And 'tis possible that some of
 Gods Children may live and dye with-
 out it. However, when it is be-
 stow'd, extraordinary *Aids* of Grace
 and *Advantages* for Duty are be-
 stowed with it. The helps which
 School-Men call *necessary*, are given
 to all that are Converted : But
 those which they call *liberal*, are
 given but to them that are Assured.
 In Conversion, all Gods Children
 do receive strength sufficient to walk
acceptably with him : But when they
 are sealed by the Holy Spirit, they
 receive additional strength to walk
more serviceably. Now as more is
 given to them, *proportionably* more
 is required from them ; more than
 from *other Converts*, that are not yet
 assured

assured of their Peace with God. *Luk. 12. 48.* Every Israelite owed God much; but the Nazarite owed him much more.

If I were asked, *Who of all the living were deepest Debtors unto God, and had most work set them to do.* I would say, *assured Christians!* - Yea, and I verily think, that next unto *Saints Glorified*, none are so painful and so humble as the *assured*. True it is, in many things they themselves do offend: And 'tis not in *Perfection attained*, but *expected*, that the best of them dare to glory. Wherefore their Eye is, at least it ought to be ever kept, upon the last particular concerning our *Reconciliation unto God*. And that is,

7. *The Judgment days publication and perfection of it.* *Acts. 3. 19.* *Sins shall be, in open Court, blotted out, when that day of refreshment cometh from the presence of the Lord.*

Booth

Re-

Reconciliation shall be published to purpose, when in the audience of Men and Angels, God the Judge of all shall pronounce it with his Mouth. And so, that he will be *admired in his Saints and all that believe.* To wit, for the heights whereto he exalteth them, *2 Theff. 1. 10.* Hear but one Apostle more; *1 Joh. 3. 2.* *When he shall appear we shall be like him :* That is, when God displays his own Glory in the Son of his Love ; who comes at the last day *in the Glory of his Father ;* we shall be as like him as shall be fit for Children to be like a Father. There shall be no sign of any variance ever being betwixt us : But all the *Blessedness* possible shall speak his perfect Reconciliation to us, and all the *Holiness* possible shall speak our like Reconciliation unto him.

Whether the sins of Believers shall be all of them published in the general Judgment, is a Question. Learned
Alting

Alting brings five Reasons for the *Affirmative*, and as many for the *Negative*. But it is most undoubted, that the blessed Friendship betwixt God and them, shall be then shewn abroad through the whole Creation; and be exalted beyond the reach of our present words or thoughts !

St. *Austins* Mother, hearing a Sermon of Heaven, is reported to have cryed out ; *O what do I here in this World ?* Methinks Reader, thou shouldst imitate her. And here exclaim ; *O what have I to do all my days, but provide for this Judgment-day ?* Wouldst thou know what course to take for this provision ; I beseech thee attend unto the fifth and last Position, that I offer for explicating my Doctrine.

Pos. 5. *Mans business touching his Reconciliation unto God, falls into three particular exercises.*

Attention, Reader, Attention ; give here thy best Attention ; and the

the greatest thou ever gavest, to the things that best deserve it. *These Exercises must be thine, if ever the war between God and thee do come to an end.* The war lies in this, which of you shall have their will. Fain thou wouldst have thy own will, as bad an one as it is. As mad a Mind as 'tis led by. I mean, as void as 'tis of *Truth*, and as possessed as 'tis with *Error*. *Self-will is the sin of sin.* It lives longest and dyes last, in every sinner. Fain wouldst thou live, as thou listest; Think, speak, and act, as thou plearest; have thy Thoughts and Works also free: Fain wouldst thou be thy own *Man*, yea, and *God* too. Making to thy self no *God*, but thy self; and observing no *Law* but thy *Lust*. I, and after this done, thou wouldst not be undone. Thou wouldst gain this in the World, and not lose thy Soul; take the Hell *in* sin, and miss the Hell prepared *for* it. Thou wouldst

wouldst *Temporally* and *Eternally* disjoyn the evil of *Suffering* from the evil of *Doing*. And escape that, though thy Life be spent, to the last breath of it, in this. But God saith thee *no*; and sends forth *Proclamations* to the contrary. From him I have Commission to tell thee; and I do by these Presents give thee to know; God will tear Heaven and Earth in pieces, and (if it could be) he would himself dye in the fight, rather than thou shouldst have that will of thine. Rather, then thou thyself shouldst escape the misery of Divels, if thou wilt hold their enmity, and keep unreconciled as they. Yea, and rather than he will ever afford thee *Reconciliation*, in any way but that of his *Gospel-Revelation*.

If therefore thou learn'st not, and fallest not unto these Gospel-Exercises that I am commending, thou plainly thus speakest; "To Hell,
" my

" *my Soul*, get thee going to Hell.
 " *O extremity of torment*, I will ven-
 " *ture thee ! O eternity of anguish*,
 " *I fear thee not ! O Worm, that*
 " *ever livest, and O Fire that never*
 " *dyeſt*, I will bear you both ! And
 " *O you exerciſes that are the Cha-*
 " *riots of Grace and Eternal Glory*,
 " I tell you all three, I ſcorn you !
 Frightful words ; and not to be
 heard without amazement, and a
 quaking Heart !

Reader, were I to beg but one
 Bleſſing for my own Soul, and for
 thoſe that are deareſt unto me, it
 ſhould be this : That we might hap-
 pily *begin and hold on* theſe three
 Exerciſes. Whereof I ſhall treat as
 plainly and fully, though as briefly as
 I am able. Take them together firſt,
 thus. They are,

I. *Of Believing and Conſidering*
Reconciliation, in reſpect to the three
 firſt particulars. That is, *as pur-*
poſed,

posed, as purchased, and as proved to be so.

2. *Of praying and labouring for Reconciliation, in respect to the three next particulars : That is, as possessed, as perswaded or assured of, and as practically improved.*

3. *Of hoping for Reconciliation, and rejoycing in it, in respect to the last particular : That is, as published and perfected.*

And here, observe thou well ; how far it is from *brick and bondage* whereto thou art called. *Idleness, is of the worst wracks, that an Humane Soul can be set on ;* and thou art called to *employment* right honourable. Thy *Labour* is not desired, till admirable encouragements unto it are *known*, and well *considered* first by thee. No, nor till *superabundant aids* from Heaven are *invoked*. Thou art not set to *Labour*, but in *Hope*, and for or
with

with Joy unspeakable and full of glory. The World deals quite contrary with its Vassals. In the ways of sin, Men *know* not whither they go, and are not suffered to *consider*, what they are like to have for their Labour. And indeed their *Labour* is to sow in much pain what they reap in Eternal Torment. In their Lives and Labours, as in their Deaths, they have no *Hope*; or what is worse than none. They are far from *Joy*; the Spirit of God assures us, there is no Peace to them. And their Mirth is nothing in the world but light-headedness. *Their going to Play-houses, is but sending themselves to Bedlam.*

Come on then, and learn the way, and enter into the joy of the Lord. The Lord that sends me to invite thee, and thus direct thee.

First, *Thou must believe and consider, that Sinners Reconciliation unto God is a thing purposed by God,*
pur-

purchased by Christ, and proved to be so by the Holy Ghost.

I have shewn it to be so. But O Man ! *Understandest thou what thou readest ?* I have proved it by Authority of Sacred Scriptures ; but alas, *Believest thou the report of them ?* It is scarce every hundredth Man of those who *own* them, that doth in truth *believe* them. So judg'd the great *Calvin* himself. And the truth is, if in any thing it be harder then other to credit Divine Scripture, it is in its Testimony unto this great Truth. Nevertheless so it is, that its Testimony herein must be *credited* sincerely, and *considered* of seriously, before we can be qualified for *Christianity* : That is, for Jesus Christs reconciling and saving Religion. For the embracing it with seriousness and sincerity, unto our Reconciliation and Salvation. Who can charge his Conscience with all respects to a Religion, whose first
Prin-

*Principles and very Foundations he is ignorant or doubtful of? Who can pursue it whatever it costs him, and give it the Government of his Life and Soul? They who do any less, do but dally with Religion; they do not use it like it self. And they who do so much, need to be very well certified of the goodness of the grounds they go upon. If not, they must continually be like to Builders, who doubt their Foundation is ill laid; and therefore either by and by *desist* from their work, or *go on very heartlessly* with it.*

Thus therefore must thou do, whoever thou art that desirest Reconciliation unto God. With a solemnity suitable to the moment of the affair, thou must go and enquire into these things: Namely, *Whether thou hast Faith.* And, if thou hast, *What a Faith it is that thou hast,* concerning the things foresaid. Alas, *Sin is distractive:* And Minds
fin-

sinfully distracted, do conceit themselves to believe, whatever they do not in words contradict. Nor do they at all discern the difference between *Moon-light* and *Sun-shine*. Though the former be cold, and dispel no Vapours, and ripen no Fruits, as the latter doth by its equally useful and beautiful Beams. They distinguish not between the *Historical* and *worthless* Faith of *Devils*, and the *operative saving* Faith of the operation of God. Though the difference be as plain, as that of a *painted Sun* upon a rotten Signpost, from the *true Sun* in the middle Heaven. In a word : Thou must discourse thy self soundly concerning these things ; and admit no rest, till thou feelest thy self more then *almost perswaded* : Till thou canst say (as the Doctor of the *Gentiles*,) *I know and am perswaded* ; (and as the Doctor of the *Jews*,) *I believe, and I am sure* ; Lord,

“ 1. There

" 1. There is a God. 2. This God
 " is Three distinct Persons, as to
 " manner of Being and of Work-
 " ing. 3. Of these Divine Per-
 " sons, the First hath eternally *Pur-*
 " *posed* ; the Second hath in time
 " dearly *Purchased* the Reconcilia-
 " tion of lost Sinners ; and this the
 " Third hath convincingly *Proved*.
 " 4. I perish for ever, if this Re-
 " conciliation be not Purposed *con-*
 " *cerning* me ; if it be not Purcha-
 " sed *for me* ; and if it be not Pro-
 " ved, some way, *unto me*. 5. Un-
 " til I have this Proof made unto
 " me, I cannot possibly have know-
 " ledge of the Purchase and Pur-
 " pose touching me. 6. Wherefore
 " I *ought*, I *may*, and I *will* by Gods
 " assistance, seek diligently this said
 " Proof unto my inmost Heart
 " and Reins ! Hasten, *Man*, hasten
 thou, go Read, go Pray, go Hear,
 and go Consult the best Ministers,
 and Christians : Beseech them both,

to tell thee how they gat assurance and certainty hereof; charge them to pray the same Spirit, in the use of like means, to give it unto thee. But this caution take thou: Never judge thy Belief right and valid, until it discover it self to be so by these properties. e. g. *Till it do shame thee for former neglects of the Father, Son, and Spirit; and their Purpose, Purchase, and Proof.* Making thy blushing Soul to exclaim; "O never had I one thought worth the thinking till now! Miserable Fool, I have lived like a brute; as if I had been born in the Field, and bred among the Cattle therein. I abhor my self, and every breath of my past Life. Again, *Till it do smart and pain thee, and give thee grievous feelings, of thy want of more acquaintance with the Divine Persons, and these their actions.* Causing thee to esteem and desire acquaintance with the same,

above

above all the sensual delights under the Sun. Likewise, *Till it become an effectual Goad to quicken thee to the use of all means for it, and a Nail also to fasten thy Soul unto it.* Driving thee to this conclusion ; q. d. " Whatever I shall henceforth
 " propose to my self, or prosecute
 " in the World. I will never so
 " absolutely propose any thing.
 " Never so laboriously and incessantly pursue any thing, as my
 " acquaintance with the Divine
 " Persons, and these their foresaid
 " Works. In other things I will be
 " less resolute and more moderate ;
 " in this I will be peremptory, and
 " I will strain every Nerve of my
 " Soul. Lastly, *Till it do sweeten, and make grateful and pleasant all thy Religious pains.* At least, as the most imperfect certainty that Husbandmen have of Harvest, doth impart a sweetness unto their perpetual motions. Till thou canst

truly say, thus : “ So much I know
 “ of the Divine Persons. So far I
 “ do credit the Holy Spirits Testi-
 “ mony of their Works. Such Faith
 “ I have of both, that what Ordi-
 “ nances and Duties were hereto-
 “ fore burthensome or undelightful,
 “ are now become of my chiefest
 “ joy : And such as I could not live
 “ without.

And now, Man, now first beats
 thy Pulse. This is the first *breath*
 of thy laudable Life. The first *step*
 of thine toward God. The first
stroke of reconciling work. This is
 the first hairs breadth thou hast
 stirred from thy self-ruining Enmity
 toward the way of Peace. God
 speed thee onward ! For

Secondly, *Thou must Pray and
 Labour for the actual possession, the
 comfortable perswasion, and the pra-
 ctical improvement of Reconciliation
 unto God.*

Thou

Thou art now out of doubt, there is a way to get *possessed* of the Reconciliation *Purposed*, *Purchased*, *Proved*. But can thy *blindness*, unassistedly, find that way? Or, can thy *halting* Soul enter into, and walk in it unassistedly? Or, if with much ado thou wert able, wouldst thou go without infallible *counsel* and invincible *aid*? And that for want of asking. Or didst thou never hear of multitudes that perish in the very *mouth* of their way? Stumbling unto perdition, at the very threshold of the door of Salvation.

I do now suppose thee to have an Eye in thy Head. And if so, I nothing question but thou hast a *Tongue* in thy Head too. *The Eye of Faith*, and *Mouth of Prayer*, were never yet known far asunder. And indeed it would be a wonder, if any seer of Reconciliation should not be straitway a wrestler for it. However, wot it well: Divine Authority requires, and Bounty invites and in-

treats thee to shew that with thy *sight* of Reconciliation thou hast received *Praying Lips*, and *Labouring Hands*, and a *large Heart*, craving no less then the three things fore-said. Of which in their order, hear what follows.

1. *For the possession of Reconciliation unto God ; let Heaven be made to ring with thy Prayers, and let all that see thee on Earth be witnesses of thy pains.* Pray for it ; but not out of Gods own way : That would be to *Blaspheme*, not to *Pray*. Pray for it, by Prayer for the grace whereto God hath made the promise of it. *Repentance* by which thou art to be divorced from the Law of Sin, and Covenant of *Works*. And *Faith*, by which thou art to be joyned in the Gospel-Covenant unto Jesus Christ. Pray, I bid thee ; for *thou art no more able, of thy self, to fulfil the demands of the Gospel-Covenant then of the Legal*. And Christ has no Authority to possess thee of Peace, till thou

thou dost answer the demand of the
 Gospel-Covenant. *The Elect them-*
selves, (though they be loved with a
 Love of good Will from Eternity,)
 they lye under the sentence of *wrath,*
till they consent unto the Covenant of
Grace. And must so do. For Christ
 is not sent to give *Remission* of sins
 before *Repentance* of them ; *Acts*
5. 31. Nor before *Faith* on him,
 (which is joyning in Marriage-Co-
 venant unto him :) *Acts 10. 43.*
Acts 20. 21. But Precept, and Ex-
 ample of good success, provoke Men
 Unreconciled to Pray for Repent-
 ance and Faith ; *Acts 8. 22.* *Luke*
18. 13. &c. Well, But is *Prayer*
all ? By no means. Thy labour is re-
 quired, Man. God knows thy Po-
 verty, and requires no *Price* from
 thee. The whole thereof he took
 from Jesus Christ : But thy *Pains* he
 will not excuse thee. He calls sin-
 ners to *recover themselves out of the*
snare of the Devil : *2 Tim. 2. 26.*
 That is, by the most diligent use of

the means of their recovery. By the utmost *striving* to keep from all things that hinder Recovery and Reconciliation : Such as a Man would make to stay himself, if he were hurrying down a Hill that had a Lake of Fire at the foot of it. As also by extreamest *straining* and putting forward to do all required for Reconciliation. For instance ; go retire thou ; and after Divine Help implored, sit down and *reason* the Case as strongly as thou canst with thy self. Urge thy own Soul to consent to the Gospel-Covenant ; as a good Parent would urge a wild and wicked Child, with the mightiest Motives it could find. *Pray and intreat* thy self as importunately as thou art able. Beseech and beg thy own Soul, as a Parent his Childs, to yield unto God. *Charge and command* thy self too ; adding the most frightful *threats* of Vengeance, and sweetest *promises* of Grace to drive and draw thy Heart. Diligently *Answer every*

con-

considerable Objection thou hast against Repentance and Faith. Tell thy self plainly, come what will as to *Estate, Name, and Friends, &c.* the Covenant of Grace must be entered, and shall. That thou art resolved to use any violence possible, in this case, to get Gods Peace. I mean, the most constraining *Arguments*, the most intense *Desires*, the most fixed *Resolutions*. As a Father will catch any way a Child falling into the Fire; making nothing at all of breaking its Arm or Leg, so he save its Life. Briefly, this know; in order to your Reconciliation unto God, such pains of yours with your selves are as surely *necessary* as they are *possible*. And who, I wonder, can tell me, when such self-labours were ever *unprofitable*. When I shall hear that any Soul is become such a painful Preacher to its self, persevering in it; I shall not stick to say, it is answering the Call of God in my Text. And I shall sweet-

ly think, what a Brand soever it has been, 'tis one that must not lodge for ever in the Fire. *I am not able much to doubt a Mans well-doing, when I know him painful in Soliloquy, and much in fervent Prayer.*

Reader, shut the Book. Go and make thy God above, and thy Conscience within, and thy Friends that be fit, to say of thee, Behold, he Prays! And behold, he labours more abundantly then Hypocrites do, to lay hold of Life. Then return, and read on; and know, that,

2. *For the comfortable perswasion of thy being Reconciled unto God, thy Life must be Prayer, and thy Pleasure be Labour. Thou must Pray without ceasing, and Labour without complaining; thou must always do, and evermore delight, in both. In the instant wherein, thou consentest unto the Gospel-Covenant, God and thy Soul are Eternal Friends. The Creation shall drop down, and fall into its first nothingness, when that Co-*
venant

yonant fails. But though thy state
 be so *safe*, 'tis a question how long
 it will be before it will be *sweet*.
 Bitterly did *Mary* weep, when Je-
 sus stood by her, she not knowing it.
 Tears filled *Hagars* Eyes, and De-
 spairs drew the Blood of her Heart,
 when the *VVell* was fast by her, and
 she was not aware of it. 'Tis often
 so, through their own fault, and
 long so, with Gods reconciled ones.
 They have their Pardon and their
Pass for Heaven sealed in Heaven;
 but not knowing so much, their
 Consciences write and sign their
Mittimus to Hell: And so make the
 greatest part of their Breath be spent
 in Sighs. Horrid Robbery! To
 God of Praise, to Souls of Peace,
 and of Usefulness in the *VV*orld. O
 Christian, this remember: *Want of*
assurance made by negligence, is a sin
whose name ought to be Legion: For
'tis a thousand strong. Be it there-
 fore considered.

How

How worthy is full perswasion of Gods Peace, to be prosecuted by the utmost strength of thy Prayer? And conclude upon this; thou hast no ground to expect that it should be *given* without thy *asking*: Or be *found* without thy *seeking*. Yea, or upon *ordinary* asking and seeking. Believe it, 'tis the sweetest of Gods Mercies, and the highest of the Honours he bestows under the Sun. And the generation of his Favourites do, all, bear witness; he doth not use to *give* it, or *continue* it, much less *encrease* it, and make it *full*, without especial ardency of Supplication, with accuracy of
 See Mr. H. Hickmans most excellent piece of the Believers Duty toward the Spirit. Conversation. Indeed these, when they meet, he useth to honour with it;
Psal. 6. David seems to have begun his Prayer at Hells door, but to have ended it in the very porch of Heaven. And I have heard of some, that under tormentive fears, have gone

gone into their Chambers, lock'd
 their Doors, and humbly told their
 God they could not come away un-
 til he had given them some comfort-
 ing assurance of his Love and Peace :
 And did not come forth without it.
Psal. 50. ult. : It is to the right or-
 ders of their Conyerfation, that
 the Lord promifeth to fhew his
 Salvation ; *1 Tim. 6. 18, 19.* St. Paul
 reckons up a great deal, neceffary
 for attaining affurance of it. And
 fo doth St. John 5. if you confider
 together *1 Jo. 3. 19.* with 18th ver.
 I appeal to the common fenfe of all
 found Believers in the World ; whe-
 ther when they are themfelves, they
 can content themfelves with a bare
possibility, or no more then a *proba-*
bility of being reconciled unto God ?
 Or with fo much as we call a *Condi-*
tional certainty : Which is, when a
 Man fets himfelf to Believe and Obey
 the Gospel ; confident he is Recon-
 ciled if he be fincere, but doubting
 whether he be fo or no : And whe-
 ther

ther they do not ordinarily, when they are without it, *Pray more than ordinarily* for assurance ; double their Watch ; and set themselves to a walk more than commonly strict, both for exercise of Graces, and performance of Duties ; in order to the first *gaining* or *regaining* of lost assurance.

Reader, Lay to thy Heart my advice. Rest not in the twilight of Uncertainty. Raise thy Holy Ambition much higher : And take the course just now fore said, to get possessed of positive Certainty ; that thou mayst sail to Heaven with full sails, and have an abundant entrance. Of this, I nothing doubt, but my Text contains Commandment. Oh that I were as sure thou wouldst forthwith say ; " Farewel
" *curfory Prayers*, and *drowsie Services*, and *Laodicean Religion* ! I
" might have read my Name in the
" Book of Life long ago, had it not
" been for you. You, whom now I
" banish

“banish with this solemn protest entered against you. I will henceforth equally dread to do the works of the Devil *furiously*, and to do the work of my God *negligently*. The Prayer, Labour, and Life of Faith, do not *Meritoriously* purchase, but they do most *Blessedly evidence* Eternal Reconciliation. And in these *Chariots* will I go mount and ascend unto the full assurance of Hope. Which being done, I advise thee next in these words,

3. For the practick improvement both of thy Reconciliation, and of thy assurance thereof, let thy Prayers and Pains be heaped up, pressed down, and running over. O think not that when thou art certified of thy real Peace with God, thy work is done; thy staff may be set behind the door; thou hast no further to go. No, Christian, no: But then when thou canst so easily answer, *what thou hast received more than others*: Then, then

is

(50)
is the time for thy straining to get as ready thy Answer to a second Question ; *What thou dost more than others ?* What thou dost more in all manner of Holy Conversation and Godliness, more than those that are unassured do ; and more than thou thy self didst do, before thou hadst assurance.

For why, are the Consolations of God *Goats hair*, and *small things* with thee ? Or dreamest thou, that they be Talents given thee for thy own *Comfort*, and not for Gods use and *special service* ? Or, tell me plainly ; canst thou thy self take *Comfort* in them, unless thy God has *Glory* from them ? Or is it possible that such a Man as thou, should never have heard of many, that have by non-improvement sinned themselves out of *Comfort* into *Torment* ? Yea, by the negligence of *one Hour*, lost the assurance they had gotten by the hard *Prayers* and *Labours* of *many a Year*.

Reader, If thou art an assured Christian ; if indeed the same Spirit that united thee to Christ in thy Effectual Calling, and *worked* all Grace in thee, hath also *witnessed* that Grace and Salvation unto thee ; then, as for thy Life, consider ; *As sure as God calls Sinners to come in to the holy state ; and calls penitent Believers to go on farther and farther in it : So surely doth he call assured Believers to go fastest and farthest in it.* And the more they do know that their *much is forgiven*, the more to Love and Obey him that forgiveth. A Truth denied by *none*, nor doubted by *any*, worthy to be remembered by *all*, and of all, by such as I do suppose thee.

Certainly, the assured Christian oweth God most Thanks. *Is* and God giveth assurance to qualifie for Gratitude, and to provoke unto it. Certainly, *The unthankful are numbered with the unholy ; 2 Tim. 3. 2.* And are unholy, and that most un-
naturally

naturally too : (For naturally we are Thankful even unto our fellow VVorms.) Yea, most universally also. For, *Thankfulness, is, in a well explained sense, all our Gospel-Obedience.* 'Tis the general Duty of the Gospel, containing and animating all Duties. All, without it, are impure Carcasses. *Repentance*, if it be not Thankful, is rather a Legal rack and rage than a Gospel Repentance. And *Faith*, if it be not a Thankful Consent unto the Gospel-Covenant, 'tis no saving Consent. Nor is the *Love of God*, or any Service of him, proper or tolerable, unless they be grateful. Unless done upon this motive, or account ; because *Christ hath loved us, and given himself for us.* As Legal a Preacher in repute, as any among us, hath these memorable words ; *If we obscure the Doctrine of Gratitude, we do as bad or worse than the Antinomians.* But I return.

Reader, If thou beest the Man I suppose ; the reconciled and assured Man,

Man, I mean ; thou art not yet about thy business. Thou art not obeying my *Text*. Thou art not heeding my *Doctrine* : Unless thou art engaged in raising thy *Prayers* to a higher pitch ; and in refining all thy *Ways* to a further degree, then ever before. Unless thou art daily thus schooling thy self ; “ Come up
 “ my Soul, come up, and sit up
 “ higher. Keep not thou at the
 “ threshold, and just within the door
 “ of Holiness, and in the lower places any of them. Ascend, ascend,
 “ ascend in thy aims at Perfection.
 “ Ascend higher in every Prayer and
 “ Petition. Ascend to the utmost
 “ heights of *incarnate Sanctity*. To
 “ these 'tis that Gods Trumpet alarums thee. Nor is it for thee
 “ *Excusable* to do that which for others would be *Laudable*. Thy
 “ assuredly Reconciled God, will as
 “ assuredly smite thee with his sharp
 “ Chastisements, if thou dost but as
 “ his unassured Children do. If
 “ thou

" thou Mortifiest *Corruptions* but as
 " they. Repellest *Temptations* but as
 " they. Actest *Graves* but as they.
 " Performest *Duties* but as they. Im-
 " provest *Comforts* but as they. Bear-
 " est *Troubles* but as they do. O my
 " Soul, thou must, and thou shalt in
 " *design*, in *desire* and *endeavour*, do
 " no less than PERFECT Holi-
 " ness. Thou shalt love them that
 " hate thee. Thou shalt swim against
 " the stream of sinning multitudes.
 " Thou shalt have thy *Hopes* and
 " *Fears* most, upon unseen *Goods*
 " and *Evils*. Thou shalt be merciful
 " to others, and severe to thy self.
 " Thou shalt chuse *Moses* his choice ;
 " and suffer rather than sin. Thou
 " shalt joy in tribulation. Thou shalt
 " fall with *Gods Friends*, rather than
 " rise with his *Enemies*. Thou shalt,
 " of all thy sins, sacrifice thy *Isaac*,
 " and thy darling own iniquity.
 " Thou shalt live on Gospel-Promises.
 " Thou shalt still be upon the Self-
 " denying side. Thou shalt be for-
 " ward

ward for all Duty, but keep thy
 " fire for the weightiest Duties. Thou
 " shalt count least sins, no little Ene-
 " mies. Thou shalt love thy Re-
 " provers. Thou shalt in every
 " Commandment look to the First.
 Which being done, it sweetly fol-
 lows ;

Thirdly, *Thou must assiduously hope
 for the Glorious Perfection and Pub-
 lication of thy Reconcilement unto God
 in the day of Judgment, and rejoyce
 in that hope.* And here, know thou
 first, thy business is not so easie as
 thy warm Heart may presume it.
Hope and Joy are sweetest feelings :
 And above all, suitable unto our na-
 tural desires, and delightful. Be-
 sides, Hope can have no surer ground
 then Gods *Word, Oath, and Sign and
 Seal, or Sacrament ;* and that thy
 Hope of perfected Reconciliation
 hath received. Neither can Joy have
 a more congruous and compleat Object,
 then Gods perfect and published
 Friendship : And this is it thou hast

to rejoyce in the expectation of. But alas, both *Hope and Joy* have enough to do to live in this World. They appear to many poor Souls, very improper to the best state herein: Because the best estate on the Earthly Globe, is not as that in Heaven, without *Sin, Sorrow, Fear, Pains, Enemies, Temptations*. No, but it has the Soul burthened with *guilt*; debased and vexed with adhering *corruption* and rebelling; cloathed with *infirmities*; assaulted with *tempters*; afflicted by the *world*; beset with *dangers*.

Nevertheless I must tell thee, such is thy Nature, that thou must and wilt hope, and rejoyce in hope of somewhat or other. *Corruption* and *Temptation* will make thee do both on wrong Objects; if *Grace* and *Heavenly Inspirations* make thee not exercise both, on these right ones that I name. And, whatever thou imaginest, God is more dishonoured when he is robbed of these affections of Hope.

Hope and Joy, then when he is denied any others. And much more reproached, when you rob him of them, then when any other Children of his so do: Any unassured of his Peace with them, I mean. So great are thy engagements to live hoping, and joying in the hope of thy perfected published Reconciliation.

Dost ask me *what Hope is* ? I Answer, It is Desire ; though all Desire be not Hope. By Hope, I do understand a Desire of some good that we think *future*, and to come ; tho' through many difficulties. A Desire that is *continued* and persisted in ; not such as a Childs is of its playthings, which is lost and gone with the next fancy that starts in its mind. A Desire , that is also *exercised* in thinking and expecting of its Objects ; and can no more be satisfied without it , than Hunger without Bread. A Desire, *not easily to be diverted* for so much as short spaces of time

time from its object ; but cleaving incessantly unto it in *Meditations*, and *Suppositions* and *Discourses* endless. In the *Learned Languages*, Hope is expressed by words that signifie to look out at something distant, to behold it often and wistly, and as it were to send our Souls out at our Eyes to go meet it. I have somewhere read, that the *Hungarian* word for Hope is *Remeni*, of *Re*, which signifies Above, and *Meni* as they call Heaven. Very proper, being that the fully reconciled state there, is indeed the principal object of sacred Hope : *Rom. 5. 2. We rejoyce in hope of the Glory of God. Col. 1. 27. Christ in you, the hope of Glory.* To wit, the Glory put on Believers in the great day of their compleated and proclaimed Reconciliation.

Stay *Reader* ; close now thy Eyes, and think what of this Hope is, and what of it ought to be in thee ! And, as 'tis no hard thing to do, tell thy self

self what a Life a good measure of this Hope would make thee ; how Serviceable, how Comfortable !

The latter God requires from thee as surely as the former. Where be thy *Eyes* if thou seest not the express Texts, which the Holy Scripture presents ? Where thy *Reason*, if thou conceitest that unto so full an *object* of Joy given thee, he doth not require a proportionable *act* ? Awake Man, and say thou ; what is it must go to compleat an object for Joy ? And of all of it, what one thing is wanting in compleat Friendship with thy God. We rejoyce in *things of great value and price*. And surely this is a Pearl of price. The Wisest Lord paid the dearest price for it. We rejoyce in *things proportionable unto our wants*. And this will not leave one unsupplied, or any desire uncrowned. We rejoyce in *things pure*. And surely, if the Sun in the Firmament hath spots, this blessed Light hath not one. We rejoyce in

things wonderful. And surely this is the greatest wonder that Infinite Power ever wrought: We rejoyce in *things that present varieties.* And surely this must have abundance in the Rivers of its Pleasures. We rejoyce in *Victory.* And this is nothing but Eternal Triumph it self. We rejoyce in *Preferment.* And this is the highest exaltation that we can conceive; yea, and higher than we can conceive. We rejoyce in *excellent Company.* And here all that is Lovely is to meet, and never to part.

And now I ask, what does the Lord thy God require of thee, if not to rejoyce in the hope of this Glory? *Greatly* to rejoyce in it, and *always.* This thou mayst do, and sorrow never the less, but much the more for thy sins. *The Feast of the Pascheover admitted bitter Herbs, yet required them.* And many a sweet shower have I seen fall, while the Sun has beautifully shone. Indeed *perfect Joy* is not to be had on this

side of Heaven : But we might, and we ought to seek and find *sufficient Joy*. Sufficient to make our Lives sweeter than any Sinners be. To make *the things that do embitter our Lives* less grievous to us, and more tolerable than they be. To make *vain Recreations and Pleasures falsely called*, more despicable to us than they be. To make the *Thoughts of God and the Life to come*, more familiar and pleasant than they be. To make *Ordinances*, and publick and private *Duties* more delightful; and the *thoughts of Death* far less terrible. I heartily compassionate the poor melancholly Creatures, (as Men will call them,) who by means of afflictive *Badily Maladies*, are incapacitated (save by Miracle, or Gods extraordinary working,) to rejoyce as they ought. As to their own Blessedness, I know the matter is not so great as we are prone in our hast to think. Through those said Maladies, Satans advantaged Malice leads them

easily into mistakes of their state; and makes them breathe in trouble as in their Element, and never know many hours but full of griefs and fears. Nevertheless the day of their perfected and published Reconciliation will wipe away all their Tears; and give them Joys enough to drown the memory of their Sorrows in.

But O Christian, whoever thou art that hast not *that Milstone about thy Neck*; that horrid hinderance of high and holy rejoycing; grant me my request. As upon my Knees I beg and pray thee, *make Conscience of the command to rejoyce and be exceeding glad, in hope of the compleat Reconciliation!* For the Lords sake, for thy Souls sake, for Saints sake whom thy Joy will strengthen, for pity to Sinners, whom thy sorrowful Countenance will harden; rejoyce in the hope of thy Glory! *Rejoyce presently, in prospect of that wherein thou must rejoyce Eternally!* And without one Minutes stop or stay.

stay. Dread, and depart as from Hell upon Earth, from all that tends to keep thee from this Heaven upon Earth ! *Bucholtzer* knew what he wrote, when his Pen drop'd this word ; *Latari in Deo— A Holy Man is never so like a Holy Angel, as when he rejoyces in God.* Have thy set times for solemn Consideration of these things : *sc.* How God is *Pleased* and *Honoured* by Joy so *Hallowed*. How he *Praiseth* it, and *Rewardeth* it. How much it honours him more than pining querulous Sorrow doth. How certain it is, that the most pious and penitent Sorrow, is nothing but a Purge prescribed by him for cleansing us ; and making us to relish the fat things of the Feast that I speak of. How excellently *this Joy strengthens the Soul, sweetens Duty, lightens Trouble, graceth Religion, suits the Gospel, and an adopted state* : Yea, and serves to subdue the sins that most easily beset us, and most extreemly pester us : Even in-

comparably more than all the self-disquieting *distraction*, that goes under the name of *Humiliation*. In a word : How desirable a temper the Apostles was, *As sorrowful, yet always rejoyeing* ; 2 Cor. 6. 10. *Sorrowing always, yet never as men without hope* ; 1 Thess. 4. 13. Reader, I must hope, if thou dost thus, thy following Life shall be a perpetual labour for abiding and abounding Joy : And that, if *Bodily Maladies and Satanicall Illusions* have made Grief and Fear a second nature to thee, thou wilt be perswadable ! Perswadable to make for necessary a rupture ; and try to tear thy self from thy self, for the possession of this under Heaven. *The God of Hope fill thee with all Joy and Peace in believing and expecting thy perfected published Reconciliation ! Amen.*

My next undertaking, is to evince the truth of my Doctrine thus explained. To demonstrate, that every Man hath this to do, and no Man
hath

hath any more to do in the World ;
 but to believe and consider Gods
Purpose, Christs *Purchase*, and the
 Holy Ghosts *Proof* of their purpo-
 sed and purchased Reconciliation.
 To Pray and Labour for the *possession*,
 for the *persuasion*, and for the
practical improvement of it : And to
 Hope, and rejoyce in the Hope of
 the *perfection* and *publication* of it in
 the day of Jugment.

I dare not *decline* it, knowing
 that many do need it. Nor shall I
 be *prolix* in it. They that cannot
 see by the Light of the *one* Sun in
 the Firmament, would not see if
 there were a *thousand* shining thence.
 Their Conviction I despair of, whom-
 soever these three Considerations
 shall not convince. But I propose
 them with an humble confidence,
 that they shall be made *Eye-salve* un-
 to some Souls : And mighty through
 God, against Infidelity ; as very
Spittle and Clay, as they shall appear

in any wanton Eyes. They are but three.

C. 1. *The sure word of Propheſie ſets us this to do, and no more.* Acknowledge the Scripture to be Gods *Word*, and a perfect Revelation of his *Will*, and a compleat Rule of our *Duty* ; and you acknowledge the truth of my Doctrine : I am content that no man believe it ever the more for my Ministry of it, if I do not ſhew that the Scripture ſets us to do all I ſay : Or if it can be ſhewn that it ſets us any one thing more than I ſay. Reader, Rouze up thy Soul, and read not with ordinary care what follows. I will not overwhelm thee with many Texts ; but be careful to ſet very plain and pertinent ones before thee.

The *Belief* and *Conſideration* of Gods Love and Gracious *Purpose* to Reconcile Sinners, is ſet us : *Pſalm 130. 4. There are forgivenesses with thee, that thou mayſt be feared.* That is ; *q. d.* " Lord, ſhouldeſt thou deal
" with

" with the best Man alive according
 " unto thy Laws strictness, and his
 " own Souls frequent fears ; Hell
 " must have him. But O, thou hast E-
 " ternal and Unalterable Purposes of
 " forgiving Sins, and Reconciling Sin-
 " ners unto thy self. And this is be-
 " lieved and considered of, by thy
 " Blessed Command. And if it were
 " not, there were no manner of foun-
 " dation for Religion in the World.
 " All our encouragement to all our
 " Worship of thee, is taken from this ;
Job. 3. 16. God so loved the World
that he gave his only begotten Son, that
whosoever believes on him should not
perish, but have everlasting Life. Who-
 sees not here the *Fountain* of all
 good ; Gods Love, that is, his Eter-
 nal Will and Purpose to Reconcile
 Sinners. This is set to be seen and
 considered first : Then the *Conduit*,
 through which all the good must
 flow from that Fountain ; even,
 Christ the Purchaser of purposed
 Reconciliation. Then the *Vessels*,
 D 5 which

(76)
which must receive all good from the Fountain through the Conduit : Namely, Believers on Christ, entire Consenters to be his in the Bond of the Gospel Covenant. Then the streams of good, by those Vessels to be received through the Conduit from the Fountain : Even Deliverance from ruining Enmity, and Possession of blessed Friendship with God for ever. To name no more, 2 Pet. i. 10. we are commanded to *make our Election sure*. Our Election passively, is Gods actively. Gods eternal purpose to Reconcile us. But how should this be made sure unto our hearts, without their believing and considering that God has Eternal Purposes about that matter?

The Belief and Consideration of Christs Purchase of Reconcilement, is yet us : 1 Tim. i. 15. *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the World to save sinners.* 'Tis the true and great Fundamental Article
of

of Christian Faith. Worthy of all reception into Consideration and Improvement; that Christ came to save Sinners from Enmity, and reconcile them unto God Everlastingly; *Rom. 5. 10.* When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son. When we did hate and were hated of God, Jesus Christ paid a valuable, or rather invaluable, price, to buy our Reconciliation; and bought it, leaving us as little need as we had ability to bring any Meritory price for it: And how plainly do all the Texts that command our Faith in Christs Blood, whereby it is Purchased; suppose our Belief and Consideration of it to precede?

The Belief and Consideration of the Holy Ghosts proof of this, is set us. That it is, in especial manner, the work of the Glorious Spirit, to Reveal and to Communicate all Purposed by the Father, and all Purchased by the Son, is foreshewn in this our Discourse, well known to the Church

Church of Christ ; and admirably
 well shewn by him, whom I use to
 call *John the Divine* ; I mean, our
 Learned Dr. Owen, in his *Pneumato-*
logie, or Discourse of the Holy Spirit ;
 worthy to be wrote in Cedar and
 Marble. That we are required to
 believe and to consider his testimony
 of this matter, this single Text would
 brightly evince, if we had no other ;
Mat. 12. 31. The blasphemy against
the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven
unto mer. Observe here ; our Sa-
 viour had Preached Gods *Purpose*,
 and his Errand into the World to
 make a *Purchase* of the Reconcilia-
 tion of Sinners. The *Proof* hereof
 was made by many Testimonies of
 the Holy Ghost : Principally by Mi-
 racles wrought by his Power ; which
 indeed are the utmost proofs possi-
 ble. These themselves, some would
 not believe and consider unto due
 purpose. No, but as it is *Mar. 3. 30.*
They said it was an unclean or un-
true Spirit that Christ had to witness
 these

these things. And this their Blasphemous Unbelief and Inconsideracy, is declared unpardonable ; even so, as no other sin is.

Reader, Canst thou think of this without horroure ? But see also, how are we warned not to *resist*, not to *quench*, not to *grieve* the Holy Spirit.

Acts 7. 51. *1 Thess.* 5. 19. *Eph.* 4. 30.

Not to *resist* him in the Ordinances of his Word, testifying unto us Gods foresaid Purpose, and Christs Purchase, in order to draw us to a due pursuit of our Reconcilement. Not to *grieve* him ; that is, not to provoke him to leave us, as our Friends use to do when we offend them ; by Unbelief and Inconsideracy of his foresaid Testimony. Not to *quench* him ; that is, not to oppose and put out the Light and Evidence he giveth us of the things foresaid ; preferring our Darkness above his Light ; chusing rather to be ignorant than to know Gods *Purpose*, and Christs *Purchase* of the said Reconciliation.

Not

Not to Believe and to Consider the Holy Spirit's foresaid Proof, is to Resist, and Quench and Grieve him; if any thing be so to do.

Prayer and Labour for the possession of this reconciliation is let us. Acts 8. 28. Repent (saith Peter to Simon Magus) and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. That is, Pray, if possibly thou mayest get posselt of God's Peace and reconciliation. Luke 13, 24. Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for many I say unto ye, will seek to enter in and will not be able. That is, do your utmost to enter into the Christian state, to get joyned to the Lord in the Gospel-Covenant of reconciling Grace; For many faint, chill, luke-warm souls will seek, but ineffectually. But put ye your utmost power into act.

Prayer, and Labour for the certain perswasion of this reconciliation is let us. Prayer, Psal. 4, 6. Lord lift thou up the light of thy Countenance on

us. *David's example is obliging in this case. Labour; 2 Pet. i. 10. Brethren give diligence to make your Calling (that is, into the state of reconciliation with God;) and Election sure.*

Prayer and Labour for the practical improvement of this reconciliation is set us. Psal. 119. 65, 66. Thou hast dealt well with thy Servant, O Lord: (and what follows?) Teach me good Judgment and Knowledge. That is, holily to improve thy love. Eph. 4. 32. compare with Eph. 5. 1. God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you; or been reconciled to you. And what then is inferred? Be ye therefore followers, or (as in the Original) Imitators of God, as dear Children. That is, as those that think they can never do enough to express their Love and Thankfulness.

Hope, and Joy in the Hope, of the perfection and publication of reconciliation to God, in the day of Judgment, is also set us. Hope, Tit.

2, 11, 12, 13. *The Grace of God that bringeth Salvation, teaches us to deny ungodliness, &c. and live soberly, righteously and godly in this present World.* Looking for that blessed Hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Joy Phil. 4. 4. *Rejoyce in the Lord, alway. And again I say, Rejoyce.* 1 Thess. 5, 16. *Rejoyce evermore.*

To conclude, He that doth these things, is certainly acceptable unto God, and approved of Men. All, that do fear God. Nor can any answer be made to his shame, if such a one ask, *What lack I yet?* If any do dream otherwise; and fear that this is not the whole Duty of man; let them shew but one thing more, and I will bear the shame.

C. 2. *The Nature of Religion requires this, and no more.* I must be understood of *Postlapsarian Religion.* Religion as since Man's Fall it has been modelled. Be it considered that Religion, as so considered, is nothing

nothing else but a *restored Friendship*, or a *Reconciliation* between *God and Man*, And this made in a way prescribed by the *VVisdom* and *VVill* of *God* whose revealed *VVill*, is to deal with man in a way agreeable to the *Nature* whereof he hath made him; and yet in every respect suited to the *Sovereignty* he hath over him. Plainly thus; in all his wayes with us, *God* will himself so act, that the *Power* and *Praise* shall be as *visibly* as *truly* his own. Yet so, that there shall be room and place for our acting *by* and *under* him. And *Duty* shall still be *truly* and *visibly* ours.

In this *Reconciliation*, each person of the blessed *Trinity* hath his *Gracious Part*. *The Father Reconciles us*, to wit as the *Primary Cause*, purposing of it, *2 Cor. 5. 19.* *The Son Reconciles us*; to wit as the *Meritorious Purchaser*; *Eph. 2. 16.* *The Blessed Spirit Reconciles us*; as the *Efficient VVorker* and *VVitnesser* of the *Grace*, by which we are made

Parta-

Partakers of the Reconciliation, and are assured thereof, *Joh. 3, 5. Rom. 5. 5.* So that the *Kingdom, Power, and Glory*, is here illustriously and equally to be ascribed unto the *Father, Son and Spirit*. In the meantime, we also have our part left us. *We are bid, in my Text, our selves to Reconcile our selves.* That is, to do our part toward it. So *Ezek. 33. 11. Turn ye, turn ye*; that is, Reconcile, Reconcile your selves; *q.d.* No longer turn your backs on God, as Enemies; turn about your Faces toward him as Friends.

Now, what I affirm is this. Namely, that *this part to be done by us toward our Reconciliation, consists in the things foresaid and no more.* Of these we are capable by the aids of Divine Grace. And so proper are all these to be done by us, that the Neglect must needs incense Divine Justice. Of doing ought more, we have no *Capacity*; (as blessed be God,) we have no *Commandment* in his Word, which

which hath been fore-asserted.

Of *Believing* and *Considering* the parts done by the Divine Persons, we have Capacity. *Natural*, I mean. Though *impotent* and *perverse* our Faculties be, till Grace give them *strength* and *inclination* unto good. They were created in us by God for this Noble use. And should he admit our Reconciliation without their being used thereto, an unsufferable spot would fall upon his infinite *Wisdom*. It would be said; he had made noble Powers, for no use, or but vile. Yea, and upon his *Truth* also. For it would be said, *His wrath came not down upon the very children of Unbelief*. Contrary to *Eph. 5.*

Of *Praying* and *Labouring* for our Possession, Perswasion, and Practick improvement of Reconciliation unto God, the same is to be said. We have *Natural*, and surely *English* people may be supposed to have some *Acquired Abilities* too. If not *gracious* and *supernatural*. And
 alas,

alas, what did God give us these for? What a Blemish would it be unto his *Wisdom* and *Government*, if he should require no use of them unto their chiefest ends. But grant us *Reconciliation*, and *Assurance*, and *Spiritual Prosperity* without them. And let it be told through the Earth, that he was *no Condemner of slothful servants*. Nor *Enemy to such as call not upon his name*. He bids us pray and labor for *Spirituals*; he forbids us to *Crave and Cark for Temporals*. O how should he then make us plow and sow for *Temporals*, and not make us pluck our hands out of our *Bosomes for Spirituals*.

Of *Hoping*, and *Rejoycing in Hope* of compleat *Reconciliation*, the self-same, is plainly seen. How full is our *Nature* of *Love*, *Hope*, and *Joy*? How *Noble Affections* are they, and pleasant? And for what were they put into us? Very *Children* need little *Information*. And very *Blind* they are, that see not how ill
it

it would reflect upon their *Author*, should he require no use of such *Talents*. And should he endure his Friends by the disuse of these, to publish contempt of his Friendship. For 'tis a publick Declaration that we have made us *another God*, when our Love doth not exercise it self in Hope and Joy toward the *true*.

Whereof it is, more than this, that we poor Creatures are capable, I proclaim my extreme ignorance. *Graces* all, and *Wership* Natural and Instituted, and *Duties* (personal and relative) are plainly enough comprehended. Nor may I bestow time to light Candles in that Sun. Lastly,

C. 3. *The whole Generation of the Religions will vouch it, that their Duty stands in this, and no more.* No more, unto any of them known. Next to the Infallible Scriptures, commend me to the *common sense of Believers*, for the resolution of a Religious Case. Reader, go try a number of the best known unto thee.

Ask

Ask them seriously two things.

(1.) Whether they do or dare in their daily walk, to let fall any one of the particulars aforesaid? sc. Belief and Consideracy of the Purpose, Purchase, and Proof of Reconciliation unto God. Prayer, and Labot for the Possession, Perswasion, Practical Improvement. Hope and Joy in the hope of its final Glorious Complement.

(2.) What other Religious Exercises they have, then of Faith with Meditation, Prayer with painfulness of Means for things pray'd for, Hope with Joy? Upon me be the shame, if any other be found. And if thou beest not told by all; that if these Exercises do please thee, there is nothing in Christian Religion to offend thee, Blessed is the Man whosoever is not offended in one of these! And who confines his Care only unto these. The Italians have a saying, Dangerous, is the man that has but one Business to do. But my God and the God

God of my Fathers grant, that I and my dearest Friends may never have more to do than one. And that one, be our Reconciliation unto him!

Of the Use of this Doctrine, the one half cannot be told you within the space of a Sermon. And of that which might be, I shall wave much, to press that which (I think) is needed most. Come Reader, and let me gain thy *Attention* to it, and win thy *Heart* by it. Read, and every two or three Lines thou readest, Lift up thy Soul to Heaven. And put thy name into the number of the *Reconciled*, now at this very Sermon.

Is Reconciliation unto God, the Duty, and whole Duty of every Man? Believest thou this? Thou wilt then (among many others) make these inferences.

Inf. 1. God and Men, are not as God and Devils, Unreconcilable. It is true, they are much the same as to certain Enmity. An unconvert man is truly at Enmity with God, as any damned

damned Angel is. They are also very like, as to the exceeding Difficulty of Reconciliation. *As much is to be done to reconcile God and an Unconvert Soul, as would be necessary to do to reconcile God and Beelzebub.* As great a price must be paid unto God for the one as the other. As great a Change must be wrought in the one as in the other. And as great a Power must go to the working of the Change in one, as in the other. Nevertheless, though we are like Camels, with like Bunches on our Back; there is no comparison between us and them, as to possibility of passing through the Needles Eye. Infinite Power, to which all things are possible; and equal Goodness, that shews it self in things wonderful, hath made a wide difference. *The Condition of Devils is not more truly desperate, than the Condition of Men is hopeful. And of any men, the Condition of those whom God is pressing and ever praying to be reconciled unto him.*

The

The Reconciliation of Devils is impossible ; but the Reconciliation of such Men, is *more than possible* ; even probable. On Gods part, probable ; for he is at work for it. And upon Mens own part, probable ; for they are, or appear to be, at work for it also. Reader, I beseech thee by the tender Mercies of God , through which this is true and plain, fix well this great Truth on thy Soul. I am a Man that have somewhat to do with many poor dubious Souls. Of most that come to me, I do plainly see this : It hath been unbelief of this truth, that hath long kept them from seeking after God. It is unbelief of it, that now fills them with fears inordinate in seeking after him ; and makes them come crying to me day after day, *No hope, no hope.* To the trouble of my soul, and no small expence of my time. But I forbear. Let me add this only more ; although this Truth *seem* to be Believed by all bold Sinners among us, it doth *but*

E *seem*

seem so. All indeed do grant it, but very few do believe it. And of them that do, this must be said ; their Belief is a corrupt one, and its Fruits are most abominable. 'Tis so that they believe God to be Reconciled, as hence to be made Fear him much the less, but Love him, and seek his Peace never the more. Could such Fruit rise from the Root of an intelligent and sound Faith ? It could not. Briefly, let me tell thee, that this Truth is most fundamental : And Disbelief of it is extream Blasphemy, against the Truth, Holiness, and Faithfulness of the most high God. It is true ; such as have sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost, have the door of Mercy shut upon them for ever. But to me it appears as true ; that, who such Persons be, is known unto God only : Not discovered unto themselves or any other Men. I tell the worst Sinners that come to hear me, They have as much ground to hope that God will accept them if they do Convert, as

ever

ever Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob had, before they did Convert. Yea, and because of our Gospel Sun-shine, more then they had.

I. 2. *Love indeed runs downward: And incomparably greater is the Love of God to Man, then the Love of Man unto God, or unto himself.* This I gather from Gods beginning the Peace, though Man began the Quarrel. From his here so calling on us to accept it; as speaks his forwardness to give, and our backwardness to receive it. From his amazing condescension even to pray and beseech us to receive it. This Love is as much above that of Earthly Parents, as the Heavens are above the Center of the Earth. But what is our Love of God, what is our Love of our selves? I know not a greater lover of his God, in all this World, then the Man that printeth these words: *My God knoweth that I even abhor and loath my self, because I love and delight in him no more.* And in another

place : *I can more easily forgive my self all my other sins, then my loving God so little.* O what must others say ? Other *Saints*, I mean, of inferior stature unto him. And for *Sinners*, that make light of all Gods Calls to Reconciliation ; and are inflexible by his very intreaties, for whole *Weeks, Months, and Years* together ; who sees it not ? *Their Life is a practical protest, that they will bear the prison of Hell, the torment of Fire, and that for the space of Eternity, rather than be friends with God.* So they love God ; so they love themselves. 'Tis true, we cannot here perswade them, but that they do truly love themselves, and their God too. But *in utter darkness it self men will see better.* There they will see and say, God was kind, and made them good offers ; but they were themselves their own destroyers ; being by sin bewitch'd, in heart to murder him, and in act to murder themselves. There they will understand the

the *sense*, as well as feel the *truth*, of Prov. 8. 36. and 35.

There they will know to their torment, what it is for God to beseech and pray sinful Dust to come take Pardon and Peace ; and for them to lend him a *deaf ear*, or give him a more *reproachful repulse* against convictions of Conscience. Reader, here stay a while : Think, and speak with thy self of the huge imports of this word : [*As though God did beseech you by us.*] How, GOD beseech ? SOVERAIGNTY beg ? And that of both Creatures and Rebels too ? What meaneth this, and what is it we are to learn by it ? *God beseech !* The word astonishes me ; and filleth my mind with these thoughts above others. First, *How powerful is Love, that makes Omnipotence stoop ?* Secondly, *How Lovesul is the Divine Majesty, that thus condescendeth ?* Thirdly, *How wonderful is this condescension, whereunto God never stooped before, and beyond which*

it is not to be thought possible that he should ever stoop ? Fallen Angels, had nothing like it : Fallen Men, can have nothing beyond it. God stoops ; he stoops low ; he stoops his lowest, unto us. The lowest that the nature and honour of his Government will admit. God beseech ! I do believe ; Lord, help my unbelief. I do believe, methinks I do see, and hear the Heavenly King, even thus addressing to his rebellious Subjects : " Miserable
" Creatures, as I made you not mis-
" rable, I am not pleased to see you
" so. I have made a costly provision
" for your restoration to the Happi-
" ness I made you in : And left you
" nothing to do for the same, but to
" accept it in the way of my Gospel-
" Covenant. I have taught you so to
" accept it. I have commanded you,
" and on no small penalty. And fi-
" nally, I do beseech and pray you,
" Sirs, if ye love me, accept of it.
" If ye do not love your own Souls,
" yet for my sake accept it. I will
" take

"take it as the greatest kindness un-
 "to my self, and will reward you as
 "though ye had profited me, if ye
 "accept it. You give me my high-
 "est pleasure if ye accept it. I will
 "set *Heaven* ringing for joy thereof
 "if ye accept it. As long as I live,
 "(and my Immortality will not dye
 "in hast) I will remember and re-
 "quite you, if ye will accept it. If
 "ye would not do your utmost a-
 "gainst me and your selves, ye must
 "accept it. If Grief could possibly
 "seize on Godhead, ye would make
 "me drown Heaven with my Tears
 "if ye did not accept it : And to
 "repent that ever I made you. So
 "good a will do I truly bear you,
 "though Satan and your silly Hearts,
 "by him seduced, tell you contrary
 "stories ! Arguing wildly, that be-
 "cause I drag you not to *Grace* and
 "*Glory* against your wills, therefore
 "I have not any will that you should
 "have either. *Reader* ; again and
 again read this, and cease not till thy
 E. 4. astonished

astonished and trembling Soul take fire, and flame forth in exclamations, *What manner of Love is this ? Stay me, I am sick of Love ! The Love of God and Christ do constrain me ! O Lord, I am thy servant, I am thy Gospel Covenant servant ! I am thine, Lord, save me !* In great Letters I wish this Truth written upon thy Doors and Walls : God delighteth more in Reconciling one penitent poor sinner, than in Damning all the obstinate World. I, and the main revenue of his Crown lies in it : Else he would not love Mercy above Sacrifice. Nor could we holily desire to be saved.

Reader, I cannot yet have done with thee. I must say to thee, as *Ruth* to her Mother in Law, *Intreat me not to leave thee, or return from following after thee with this Inference.* I must insist a little more upon Gods so astonishing Intreaty. And I would to God I could find or make words, prevalent with thee to insist much hereon.

hereon. To be often musing what it is, that *Gods intreaty of sinners to be reconciled*, doth in good sober Truth import. I beseech thee go and consult *God himself* in holy Prayer unto him. Go consult his *Ministers*, the best of them ; and such through whose Mouths he is most likely to speak his Heart unto thee. Go consider, and take advice, whether it import not thus much : To wit, a *real will* of God without any design or unsincerity, to have sinners reconciled unto him ; even as many of them as he sends his Gospel unto. *A will of complacence*, as of a thing that would be highly grateful unto him ; though not a *Will efficacious*, and effective of it against all wilful and affected unfitness in sinners ; super-added unto their natural. *A Will, that indeed doth not so overpower all things, as to bring all sinners unto Reconciliation ; but yet one that leaves nothing but their own obstinate Wills to keep them from it.* And makes, that all

who live under the Gospel, and who do seek it as they are directed by the Gospel, may reasonably judge their obtainment of it *most highly probable* ; and conclude that if their labour for it be lost, it will not be through failure on Gods part, but their own.

'Tis very certain, that such influences of the Holy Spirit were communicated under the *Old Testament*, that of all that lived and dyed then unreconciled unto God, the fault was laid at their own doors. *Thou gavest thy good Spirit to instruct them.* Neh. 9. 20. *Turn ye at my reproof, behold I will pour my spirit to you, I will make known my words unto you.* Prov. 1. 23. &c. O how much more must we now conclude in the Gospel day, that *Mens destruction is of themselves* ? That the Holy Spirit is always striving with sinners, and perswading them to be reconciled, until they do by very great provocations cause him to withdraw for ever from them..

By

By the *Prophets* of old, the Holy Ghost never spake in the wondrously condescensive Language, which he useth in the *New Testament*. Herein flows the Language of incomparable tenderness; and such as put it beyond the most jealous suspicion, that God is desirous of our Happiness in the said Reconciliation. Herein the *Majesty of Heaven* even courts every vile Worm of us. And in most compassionate manner, assays to melt and overcome the perverslest sinner: Even thy self, my Reader, thy self in particular.

Stay therefore thy self, and wonder, and bless. Throw aside my Book, and go shut thee into thy Closet: And there with humble affectionate and thankful sense of this Divine Love, fall on thy Knees and say to this purpose: “Blessed God, thy
“works are in themselves convincing
“Arguments of thy good Will unto
“Men. Thy innumerable *Benefits*,
“conferred upon us. Thy Tempo-
“ral

"ral *Judgments*, which in their own
 "nature and in thy design are Medi-
 "cinal and wholesome. The *Time*
 "thou allowest us in this *World* and
 "in thy *Church* ; which we cannot
 "justly take for a meer reprieve from
 "torment, but for a space to Repent
 "in, and to sue out our Pardon.
 "Above all, thy giving thy *Son* to
 "dye for our Reconciliation ; and
 "thy *Spirit* to instruct and perswade
 "us to be Reconciled. After all, it
 "has seemed thee good, to treat us
 "in words of as wonderful Love as
 "that which shines in thy works.
 "Words of *Obsecration* and *Intreaty*.
 "Such as the Potsheards of the Earth
 "cannot afford unto their *Inferiours*
 "very often ; no, nor unto their
 "Equals ; nor always unto very *Superiours*.
 "Thou, great Judge of
 "the whole Earth, beseechest Mala-
 "factors most worthy of Hell, to ac-
 "cept their Pardon ! And intreatest
 "them to endure thee to save and
 "glorifie them ! This thy Holy An-
 "gels

" gets admire ; at this the *Divels* en-
 " vy : But I, Lord, I, a *prodigy* of
 " *stupidity*, what do I do ? Of a
 " truth I desire to Praise and to
 " Wonder ! From this Minute unto
 " Eternal Ages, uninterruptedly to
 " Wonder and Praise. I am fully
 " convinced how justly I perish, if
 " indeed I perish after all this so su-
 " perabundant Grace. This thy
 " Love, and thy I know not what,
 " that is more then Love it self, if
 " more can be, doth sweeten my
 " thoughts of thee. Never was my
 " *Natural Fear* of thee so conquer-
 " ed, never my *Diabolical Enmity* a-
 " gainst thee so quenched, as now (I
 " trust) they are. *I am less a Divel,*
 " *since I considered this thy Love, O*
 " *my God !* Experience hath now
 " assured me, Love begets Love, as
 " Fire kindles Fire !

I. 3. *Mans Enmity unto God, tho'*
it be strange, tis true. How else
 could Reconciliation be his Duty, if
 his state were not of Enmity ? It is
 con-

confessed, *Enmity unto God is a
 strange thing.* He is all Good, and
 nothing but Good. Our Nature rea-
 sonable, can Love nothing but what
 appears Good; and must and can-
 not but Love all that so appears.
 Unto all Men, if their Professions
 may be believed, God doth appear
 as he is now said to be: All, and
 only, Good. Whence then should
 Hatred arise? To be sure, unto *An-
 gels and Men*, in their first holy state
 of *Creation*, God did so appear, and
 was verily and undoubtedly so be-
 lieved. O how could they ever
 break with God? The particular
 manner is more *curiously* then *profi-
 tably* disputed by Men of argute wits.
 It is very plain unto all thinking
 minds, that Creatures, *as such*, are
 mutable things and defectible. That
 continuation in any good, is from
 the gift of the Creators Grace; not
 from the *strength* of the Creatures
 Nature. That God gave Angels and
 Men at first, a stock of Holy Quali-

ties to trade with; and held both *Probationers*, on tryal of their Faithfulness. Some of the Angels, and our Father *Adam*, (the infallible word assures us,) prov'd unfaithful. Acted not up to what they had received: Thereby forfeited, and lost all; all their foresaid Qualities of *Wisdom* and *Goodness*; and consequently, became full of *Folly* and *Malice*. For, as where Light and Heat depart, Darkness and Cold must enter: Where Wisdom and Goodness do cease, Folly and Malice must begin to have place. Now hence 'tis, that ever since that fatal forfeiture, Devils, and all unrenewed Men, do do nothing but monstrously. Nothing, but with monstrous Folly and Malice. Their Fall made them Monsters; and all things must necessarily (when they are not overpowered,) act according to their Natures; let them be what they will. Their depraved Natures, both of them, do carry them to things most unnatural. To things

things that are, and that they know to be, most infinitely *Unreasonable* in themselves, and *Injurious* unto them. As for example, this of hating of God. Men do *much* know, and Divels do *more* know, he is all Goodness; and worthy of all Love. That to hate him, is to do the greatest hurt to themselves; and that for which they have not the least cause from him; but through the Folly and Malice that Divels hold *remedilessly*, and unrenewed Men hold *wilfully*, against all Divine Remedies; this is most natural unto them. As natural, as for a poysonous *Fountain* to send forth poysonous *Streams*.

And alas, how full is this World of this hatred of God, which few in the World, if any, will own? How less full is the Sea of water, then unregenerate *Souls* are full of it? Yea, and their *mouths* and *hands* full of it. Only Divels, be fuller of it than Men: By which means it is, that *only Hell is worse then this World we live*

in.

in. We see Mens *Hands* at work against God ; we hear their *Tongues* running against him in every place ; we discern hereby what the abundance of their *Hearts* is against him. How passionately they wish an end put unto his Being. We Instruct, Perswade, Intreat with tears, and Beg them to let us endeavour their recovery to a better mind : Nor is it above *one of a hundred* will regard what we say. And yet must we be afraid, (if we will be pleasers of Men,) to tell them they hate God ?

But here I publish it : *If I ever saw the Sun shine, or the Fire burn, or the Water flow, I do see all unconvert Men, Women and Children, hate the Blessed God.* And whereas, none that I meet with or hear of, do deny but that they are sinners, and do sin daily ; I assure them this is the soul and life of their sin. And were this hatred of God but once expelled, they would no longer be sinners. Were that but *mortified* they would
not

not be a minute longer *impenitent*, or *unpardoned sinners*. 'Tis predominant hatred of God, that is the ruine of every damned Man!

I. 4. *The Gospel is a Jewel*. This I do argue from our common principle ; that it is the only *directory* and *mean* of our Reconciliation unto God. If it be so ; and if Reconciliation be our only Duty, it is surely *inestimable*. It can be no less I trow, whatever is the divinely appointed mean of our whole saving Duty. Whatever is, as the Gospel is, and is named *the Word of Reconciliation*. That, whereby the way of making Peace with God is revealed ; that which is the very *Charter* and *Grant* of Christ, the Peacemaker, and all his benefits, unto every one that will receive it. If my Doctrine be true, the Blessed Gospel deserves a higher rate, then the best of us all appear to put upon it.

Consider it as an *History* ; 'tis one the

the Angels, unto whom 'tis but a History, delight to pry into. As an *offer of Salvation*, 'tis tidings of great, even all, Joy. As a *Rule of Life*, 'tis a Royal Law of Liberty. The *truth* of it, is sealed by unparallell'd Miracles. The *Grace* of it, is it self the Miracle of Miracles. In the miserable parts of the World where this Gospel shines not, 'tis ever Night. *Darkness*, and *Death* possess them. Forlorn Souls (as one speaks,) are there under a continual *Massacre*; and be an easie conquest and prey to the Fiends of Hell. But the Places which the Gospel visits, (in our Saviours Language,) are said to be *Lift up unto Heaven*.

They are found like the World at first, a *Toku* and *Boku*; but are made by the Gospel, divine *Temples*. Of Stones, Children are raised up unto *Abraham*, by the Gospel. What was our *England* but a howling *Wilderness*, till the Gospel made it a *Garden*, and the *Paradise* of the Earth.

Earth. Both for Heavenly and Earthly good things. Indeed, all the World is *Egypt*; and *there is no Goshen but of the Gospels making*! No other Star, ever led a Soul to it's Saviour. The Law damns all; and single Natural Religion saves none. The Gospel is like to the *Archangels Trumpet*; by it Graves are made to open, and dead Souls to come forth. And the *Masters of most refined Morality* will one day find, there is no other Ministration of the Spirit.

Are therefore tears of very Blood, sufficient to Lament our Gospel-Contempt. Contempt every where shewn; in *England*, in *London* it self, every where. In *Houses*, where Bibles lie about as neglected, as old Shoes. In *Churches*, where usually is less crowding and earnest listning, than in *Satan's Temples*, our Playhouses. I would I might not add, in very *Pulpits* too; from whence too often soundeth a but *Natural*, and *Legal* Religion, with few, if any *Evangelical*

Note

Note in it. It is too truly said, I fear, that many Preach *Adam, Moses,* and at most *John Baptist.* Having little to say of *Jesus Christ*; or of that Reconciliation by him through the Gospel-Covenant, which they seem to think that their People *have* already, or may do very well without it. *Save, Lord, save us from this Gospel-Atheism, or we Perish!* O let not the richest of blessings, thy Gospel-pearl, be trampled under feet in England! *Whatever sinks, Lord, raise the price of the Gospel!*

Inf. 5. *Religion is no wrack.* It has a very good action of slander, against every Reproacher. Every Liar of the Legions, that report it a dark and intricate, a Knotty and difficult business. For, as it has been shewn, it is no more, as no less,) then Reconciliation unto God. And an Exercise of our selves in the plain orderly particulars foresaid; which are all our part and business. O admirable Love and Grace of God, that shine

shine in it's *Brevity* and *Plainness*! Our *Life*, is short. And our *Bodies* eat up much of our time, in necessary cares for them. But the Doctrine of Reconciliation, is no tedious one. What the old *Friendship* was between God and Man. How the *Quarrel* rose, and how far it ran. How the *Reconciliation* is to be made, on Gods part, and ours ; by satisfying his Justice, and subduing and removing our malice. These things require shorter study, than a body of *Philosophy*. Nor are they by the Holy Spirit set forth obscurely. And so, as to require a very quick and subtle Wit to Understand them. No, *a man may be wise unto Salvation, without wit and acuteness enough to make a Disputer of this world.* Nor doth Divine Kindness less shew it self, in the *Sweetness and Agreeableness* of the Christian Religion. Such is it's Constitution we see, that it employs us in nothing, but most pleasant Exercises. In *Believing and Considering*
 most

most excellent and important Truths. *Labouring and Praying* together for the best Blessings here. *Hoping*, and *Joying* in the hope of most perfect Blessedness hereafter. Is this a Slavery, *Sensualists*, is this an irksome Toil? Is this, what, any thing, besides *affected Malignity*, can snarl at? The *Hebrews* have a saying, *An hour in Heaven is more worth then a Life on Earth*. But I know those that tell me, they have found more real solid Comfort in one hour of their *Convert State* on Earth, then ever they had in all their former *Life*. And 'tis as certain that *Religion is the best Pleasure in this world, as that Heaven contains the best in the next world*.

Inf. 6. *Minister's only business, is to make Peace*. Peace and Reconciliation between God and Men. Their business is but to promote Duty. If then Reconciliation be all Duty, all their Business must lie herein. In this my Text, they are called *Ambassadors*; not *Heralds* to proclaim War, but *Embassa-*

Embassadors to treat for Peace. True they must in order to *Peace* declare the *War* and *Hostility* between God and Sinners. It was a foolish Law the *Lacedemonians* made, that no man should tell his Neighbour any ill and frightful News. And they are belepered with ignorance and Error, who would sew up Minister's Mouths, and have them wholly silent of the Miseries of the Unreconciled State. As though God's Peace were ever to be sought, without Knowledge of his Wrath. Or as though they more dreaded to hear the *Discourse* than to feel the *doom* thereof. Nevertheless, so it is, that the *Word of God* unto Ministers committed, is the *Word of Reconciliation*. And Reconciliation is the work they are sent for. They are not to *preach* Wrath, but in order to provoke you to *fly* from it. I *preach Hell*, (said a late most *Apostolical* Preacher,) *that you may never come there.*

Reader, I am full of wonder as I can hold. Come hear, and wonder with

with me. Earthly *Kings*, put out Laws ; and expect their *Subjects*, all, should, without more ado of theirs, observe them. They do not send an Officer to every *Town*, and *House* to inform and perswade the people to keep them. Especially when the said Laws be for the *Subjects* own great good ! But, *O admirable Benignity* ! the King of Heaven puts *Parents in Families*, and *Ministers in Congregations* ? and makes it their business from one end of the Year to the other, to *Teach* and *Perswade* his poor ignorant and obstinate *Subjects*, to accept the Word of Reconciliation. Though the gain be only and infinitely theirs, not his. But I return ; attend it oh *Ministers*, attend it oh *Parents* : 'Tis the Peace of God that passes all Understanding, save Gods infinite one, that ye are Proposers, Interpreters, and Orators, and Agents for.

Higher than at Reconciliation unto God, you cannot aim ; Lower

F

you

you *should not* dare to aim, Holy
 Angels do not want it and Devils
 cannot have it. But what think ye
 of your People and your Children?
 Gods Peace and Love are the high-
 est and all good ; his Wrath and
 Curse are the deepest Misery ; and
 there is no middle Condition. Souls
 reconciled, are as it were in Heaven;
 Souls unreconciled, are as it were in
 Hell. If you aim and labor at less
 then *Unconvert mens* Translation
 from the State of Wrath into the
 State of Peace, you are at a game of
 sinful and pestilent Foolery. You
 are not in the discharge of your Mi-
 nistry. If you design not and drive
 not at *Convert mens* perswasion and
 practical improvement of their pre-
 sent ; and Hope of, and Joy in, their
 future complete Reconciliation : the
 same must be said of all your pains
 with them. It was an ancient Cu-
 stom of some *pious Fathers*, to preach
 one part of the day for *Convincing*
 and *Converting* the *Unregenerate* ; and

the other part, for *Edifying* and *Comforting* the *Regenerate* of their *Congregations*. Unto me it appears so wholesome a one, and useful, that I cannot but wish it in all *English Congregations* used. I am aware of my unworthiness to teach my Brethren; but as for you that are *private Christians*, I shall dare to give you this Advice. *Keep ye closest unto their Ministry, that keep closest to the business of Reconciliation in their Ministry.* As for *Preachers*, blessed be the Peacemakers, the Lord shame those, that are not ashamed to design no more change of their People, than *Plato* made of his *Polemo* : which was but from a *Beast* to a *Man*. He that *Preaches not at all*, and he that *Preaches not the Gospel of Reconciliation*, are under the self-same woe, 1 Cor. 9. 16.

Inf. 7. *God's Rewards must needs be like himself. Great and incomparable.* If my Doctrine be true, it must needs be so. Because, according to that, every man must needs

be a bloody *Enemy* of God, or an *entire Friend*. And if the former, *Justice* cannot but revenge it self in matchless punishments : If the latter, *Grace* cannot but display it self in supremest Advancements. Neither of them are *middle Relations*, and neither of them can be held worthy of but *middle Rewards*.

Reader, if thou hast never done it before, come spend an hour now, in close thinking what a *Friend of God* is. If thou hast, repeat again that *profitable Pleasure*. Turn back if thou remembrest not, and see what Reconciliation to God is said to be, in the entrance of this Discourse. A soul that should have the same, and no more ; I mean the same Friendship with God that Man had in his first Estate, before sin entred ; he would be a rich Creature. *Bare Restoration unto what we lost, would be no small Exaltion*. But hast thou not heard and read, what all *Pulpits* and *Books* speak of our Redeemers setting

setting Believers above that it self? And bringing them into a greater nearness to God, then the first Man had to fall from. I will not follow any to be wise above is written in the Sacred Scripture. But from them I have long ago learned that Believers are now endeared unto God, proportionably to the value of Jesus Christ's Obedience. Whereas in dignifying Man before the Fall, we cannot but suppose God to have held some proportion unto mans own. And consequently, as our Saviours did unspeakably exceed *Adams* Obedience and the *Angels* too: so the Divinely vouchsafed Love unto Believers, doth beyond all expression surpass that which was vouchsafed unto Innocent Man. I would be understood of mutual Love. A *Learned Man* hath construed, *Joh. 10. 10.* to this purpose; of Christ's *laying down his* (infinitely more valuable) *life for his sheep*, to the end *that they might have life*, (that is, all good:

all they forfeited and lost in the first *Adam*;) and that they might have it more abundantly (more of it than *Adam* ever had.) Our English Divines praise that Speech of a *Foreigner*; that *God loves the poorest Saint on Earth better than any Angel in Heaven loves God.* But I excurr no farther; I have already lost my self in astonishment. I am thinking, what a Reward this it self is; and what Rewards and Honours must necessarily follow this. *O what must be done to the man, so dear to the heart of God?* Kings Favorites have none richer than themselves but Kings. *Gods Favorites have God infinitely, and God only more blessed than themselves.* Never can I raise my thoughts of Heaven so high, as when I consider (1.) What Gods Friends are; and (2.) That Heaven's the Mansion House of his Friends. Nor can I think that Heaven must have bin what it is, if Religion had been a meer Service, and not a *Friendship*. If God had not
been

been our *Father*, but only our *Master* !

Look we on the other sad hand, and think what a Creature an *Enemy of God* is. One *Unreconciled* ; yea and even *Unreconcilable* also. God is infinitely Holy ; he hates Sin more than any Man living can hate Hell. *Enmity unto him, is the very sin of sin : And Unreconcilableness is the soul of Enmity.* — What a fire in the Soul of God must, now, be thought to burn against this wight ? And what a *Vengeance* must it be, which that *fire* executes ? If the sin for which Men are damned, was the violation of a thousand other Laws, but not of the *Law of Love* ; and was a collection of all other faults possible, beside that of *Enmity*. And if Hell were the punishment of such as had been in all other respects *Transgressors* ; but had not been *hatters of God*. I should then think it a Furnace seven times less hot, than now I am able to think it. O what

blows can Gods almighty hand give. And what should hold his hand from utmost severity, upon them with whom he is at perfect Enmity? 'Tis Sins unreconcilable Enmity, that maketh Hells eternal extremity.

I. 8. *There is no colour to be laid on any Temptation, against true Evangelical Religion.* For why? It consists in Reconciliation unto God. Awake, *Reader*, if thou art in a drowze. Do but awake and thou must needs see how clearly this follows. Tell me if a quarrel had risen between a poor *Subject* and a mighty *King*. A King, and such a King; and he also at the head of a formidable Army. And if the said King should stoop and become a suppliant to his Subject for a Peace between them. What could be said, with *any shew of Reason*, to turn the poor Subject from thankful acceptance of his Kings Grace? And that upon the very first offer. Could the united wits of all the World make it
look

give look as if it were his *interest* ; or so
 from much as *safe* for him, to slight his
 with Kings *Mercy*, and incense his *Fury* ?
 'Tis No, but whatever could be said,
 that would *appear*, as well as *be*, most ab-
 surd. Alas, alas ! What crawling
 d on Worms are the mightiest Earthly
 nge- Kings ? Worms to day, and Worms
 on- meat to morrow ! But what a *King*
 od. is the Eternal One ? What an *Host* is
 n a he Lord of ? How many Millions of
 ou holy *Angels*, and envious *Divels* hath
 bl- he, that are both of them ready at
 en his beck to tear thee in pieces ? Yea,
 ty how would *Frogs*, *Flies*, or the most
 r; despicable *Creatures* dispatch thee in
 i- an instant, if he should give them
 g Commission ?

Two things I often wish. O that
 my *Friends* would never quit the truth,
 or abate their degree of *Religion*, but
 then when Satan can indeed present an
 appearance of gain by it. I mean, a
 gain of somewhat better, or as good
 as Gods Love, in their very own
 Thoughts. And Secondly, That
 F 5 when

when ever they have thought themselves to have seen profit coming by it ; and have by and by found their mistake : That then they would acknowledge their horrid effascination ; and resolve never again to trust the spectacles through which they looked unto their cost. I know that Lust does bewitch into Error ; and Error, when it gets into the throne of the Heart, fearfully plays the Tyrant. Let Men but listen unto their *Senses*, *Fancies*, and *Passions*, they shall take the most loathsome Lyes for self-evident Truths : And when they have done, they shall be as much governed by them. They shall adore *Dogs* and *Crocodiles*, scorning *God* and his *Christ*. They shall dig for a *Worms* favour as for immortal Treasure ; and dye away for fear of its frown. And all with unshaken Confidence ; as if *God* were nothing, and *Idols* were all things. As if the smiles of a mortal Man, were really a richer good then *Gods* Heaven ; and a hard look from

from *Cesar*, were more dreadful by far then Hell-fire. But I do also know, and I keep some stir to make others know it too : Such is the admirable constitution of our Religion, such is its *perspicuity* with its *purity* ; that Humane Minds are not presently so stupified, as to be unsensible of its Glory ; or so distracted, as to dream ought spoke against it, to be *true*, or so much as *probable*. 'Tis abundance of *Opium* you give your Reason, before you make it dormant enough to let an ill thought of Religion into your Heart : Before you are capable of your sweet *Follies* and dear *Deceits*. Most commonly, you that neglect Religion, are fain to serve Satan, without so much as any *imagination* of gain by it. I, and with many a *fearful expectation* of loss too. And when your bewitched Eyes are drawn unto some imaginary recompence in any way of sin ; ye oftentimes soon afterward find the Proverbs truth ; *Fraud and Frost end*

in dirt. Well were it, if then you would set your selves to verifie another as known a saying ; *Burnt Children dread the fire !*

In a word : The day is coming that will reveal it. The Religion instituted and taught by Jesus Christ, is one that Men can *bray* and *bark* against ; as they do, and as he foretold us that they *would* ; But they cannot *argue* against. Without that *quickness*, and *subtlety*, and *solidity*, which are the priviledges of very few heads, its *excellence* and *importance* are the plainest of things unto all honest hearts. And *our Motives unto the severest Duty* are *ten thousand times stronger* than *our Temptations unto the sweetest Sin*. He has a very hard task who goes about to prove, that I shall do better without Gods friendship then with it ! That I shall have more Light, if I go further from the Sun !

I. 9. *The Kingdom of God is not Meat and Drink.* Christianity, or Gospel

Gospel saving Religion doth not consist in external *Observances*, and little *Opinions*. If it be Reconciliation, or a new very Friendship with God, it cannot stand in the poor despicable things wherein 'tis placed by too many *Ceremonialists*. I mean *Ceremonialists* of every Sect and Party among us : Many of which seem to value themselves more by some peculiar dividing Ceremony, then by common and universally professed Christianity.

Natural *corruption* disposes Men to allow God nothing at all, of *Subjection* or *Obedience*. By Gods inward and outward Calls of *Conscience*, *Parents*, *Ministers*, they are brought quickly unto shame of that *open malignity*. But *Carnality* and *Stoth*, admit not any great liberality to him : And *Lust*, and *Fancy*, and *ill Example*, soon prescribe a narrow pittance. He shall have *outward Homage* and *Bodily service*. Presence at the places of his Worship, and ob-

observation of all laudable gestures therein. He shall have *Lamps* of Profession carried for him; *Oyl* they cannot tend for, *Graces* are mysterious things. He shall have loud *Cryes*, but as for intelligent and *sincere Prayers*, they promise him not. He shall have their *Eyes* lift up to Heaven; but he must excuse them if their *Affections* be set on Earth. He shall have their Company at every *Sacramental Feast*; but they desire in this thing to be forgiven, if they come having not on the *Wedding-garment*; and unengaged in the cares of *imputed, inherent and practical Righteousness*. He shall have *Zeal* for the Religion they neither *know nor practice*; I, and it may be against the sins that they do love and live in: They hope he will accept it from them, without *Integrity*. In short; He shall have his *Church* obeyed, and *Gospel* too, as far as they themselves please: But that reaches not unto the concerns of *Regeneration, Repentance,*

penitance, Faith, Love and Obedience, principled from them. *Entering Covenant, and keeping Covenant* with him, with all the Heart, and Soul, and Strength, is that which they see no necessity of.

Miserable Creatures ! Do ye believe the blessed God to be a *spirit* or a dead *stock* ? Did ye ever read one Chapter of the Holy *Bible* ? Yea, or of the Heathen *Moralists* ? Can ye in sober sadness think, that our Blessed *Redeemer* was sent to raise dead *sinners*, that he might make them unnatural and *monstrous Flatterers* ? Or that the Holy Spirit was sent by him, to make painted Sepulchres of you ? Can ye really perswade your selves, that God may be honoured, and *Satans Kingdom* be demolished, and your *Souls* be changed and qualified for Heaven, by your Trifling and your Lying ? And without your Loving God as both your Benefactor and Ruler ? O shut not your eyes so very close till
Ven-

*Vengeance open them for you ! Look out a little ; see my Doctrine and its Proof. It shall possess you of other thoughts, and rid you of these delusions. It shall stop your scoffing at Spirituality, as a thing imaginary. At Union and Communion with God, as though they were dreams, or but lying pretensions of Hypocritical Men. At Gods Living in Men, and their Living in God, as though there were no such things. It shall make you as confident as now you are ignorant, that they are mad Men whom you hear *Fearing at the Life of holy Love ; and Promising Heaven to ever so little washed swine.**

*Magna ista credimus,
quia nos parvi sumus.
Senec.*

It shall make you to own, that had not your Sense been little, you had never took any thing but very Friendship with God, for honourable and great !

I. 10. *True Religion is its own Reward.* It is so framed by God, that in it there is great Reward, besides what

what is prepared for it. It is evidently so, if, as our Doctrine asserts, it stands in Reconciliation and Friendship with God. If it be not a *meer Service*, but a *very Friendship*, If, as is most certain, God admits all his convert *Servants* unto the relation of very *Children*, and the dignity of *Friends*. All and every of his Commands do refer to our good; and are framed as plainly to *Delight* as to *Direct* us. *Reader*, this is so plain in it self, and from very much that has been foresaid; that I crave thy regards but to these few words. Sinners generally, are full of the opinion, that Godliness has all its worth but in *reversion*. That let *Glory* be what it will, *Grace* is a very poor comfortless state: And *Saints*, do, very commonly and most faultily, give them but too much occasion so to imagine. They walk not on in the way to *Zion* with *Joy* and *Singing*. They demonstrate their very Hope but *little*, and their Joy *less*:
 From

From whence 'tis inferred, their Possession of Joy is *none*, and their hope of reversion it self is *next to none*. Thus prevails the evil report upon our present, and our promised *Canaan*. And that so much, that the best Believers are *prospered* as well as *pleased* greatly, by the Hope and Joy of those few in whom both are conspicuous. But how presently must that ill report dye, were it duly considered, that follows.

Grace and Glory differ but in degree. They do not speak congruously, that make Glory the *End*, and Grace but the *Means*. They are so much *one thing*, that the Holy Spirit calleth them by each others names. *Glory is called Grace*; 1 Pet. 1. 13. *Hope to the end for the Grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.* *Grace is called Glory*, 2 Cor. 3. 18. *We are changed into the same image from Glory to Glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* And what think we? Is it

it a *Friendship* with himself through our Redeemer, that we have on earth, or no? None do or can doubt it. Is there a *Reward* sweeter then of *Friendship*? I can hear of none. Is there a *Friendship* more honourable or beneficial then *Gods Friendship* is? It were equal blasphemy and absurdity to dream so. Finally, if God be the best Object and all goodness, as sure as any; and if *Friendship* be the best Enjoyment of him that Creatures can have: Wherein, save in degree, doth *Glory* exceed *Grace*? And if indeed *Grace* and *Glory* be for *nature* and *kind* the same thing; if one be *Friendship* with God *begun*, the other be *Friendship* with God *perfected*: How is it possible the same Man should like the one and not the other?

I am very certain, Men stand alike affected towards them, whatever they speak. And were they, that here cannot be perswaded to seek *Gods Friendship of Grace*, took up too unto
Hea-

Heaven ; and had the door set wide open ; and were ever so importunately intreated to enter in ; they would not enter, no but fly back ; and be, of the two, far more unwilling to take Glory above, then they are to accept of Grace here. As believing that Gods perfected Friendship there, would be more against them then his initial Friendship here. 'Tis equally plain, Fishes are most against dryest places, and Sinners most against the holiest ones. As sure as Heaven is more Holy, it is also more Hateful to a Sinner, then the Church state below is. In a word : *Heavenly Glory is not Reward, if Grace be not Reward.* (*Gradus speciem non variat.*) A handful of water is as truly water, as all that which the Sea contains. *Glorification above is no more truly a royalty then Reconciliation here below is.* Reconciliation unto God, I mean ; which is of all the works of God, if any be so, the most wonderful. For his taking Enemies and Rebels into
 Heaven

Heaven when they be reconciled, is nothing so marvellous as his taking us into Reconciliation with him, when we are Enemies and Rebels !

Reader, what is thy Mind, what thy Will, after all this said ? The *Assent* of thy Mind and *Consent* of thy Will are thy greatest acts, and most consequential. All thy others be but *superstructures* thereon. Speak, Man, hast thou verily *Assented* to the truth of the Gospel in my Doctrine ; and hast thou heartily *Consented* to its becoming the governing Principle of thy Life ? I hope thou art not yet *ignorant*, and thy Head *empty* of the things proposed : Nor yet *obstinate*, with thy Heart *full* of antipathies unto them. If I may so speak, some *Devils have been cast out* by this very Word and Prayer ! Are those that possess thee, of a sort that *goeth not forth so* ? Know thou, then, I will not presently give thee over, if it be so. I will carry thee in further Prayers unto him, that is able
to

to cast out the most pertinacious of Devils: Nor will I leave thee without these parting Exhortations.

Yea and I will, as for my own Life, beg and pray thee to have care of thine! Importunately (or *impudently* be it stiled,) I will beseech thee to hear, and to come and let thee and me, be Friends with God, Blessed presently and blessed eternally. Despise not my despicable appearance. My Office is honourable; I sustain the very *person* of God, and supply the *place* of Jesus Christ. My Text warrants me to say it. And I must give thee to know, 'tis *God beseeches thee*, 'tis *Christ prays thee* by these my Lines, to Turn and Live! Divine Authority here puts off its Terror, and for *Love's sake*, intreats thee. In the *Law*, it thunders; commands on pain of Death and Hell: Here in the *Gospel*, it uses a voice soft to a miracle. I never heard of a *King* knocking at the door of a dungeon all night long,

and

and calling, and crying to a *Traitor* to come accept a Peace and Pardon ; especially when he might cut off his Head , without the loss of a Hair unto his own. But at thy door, God and Christ knock. To thee they have called for many a long year, it may be. Earthly Kings put out *Statutes*, and look that every Subject should look to himself. They do not send a *stated Officer* to every Town and House, to put them in mind of it ; to explain it ; to resolve cases about it, to excite, and pray them to keep it. But God puts forth the Gospel ; and sends out Ministers to do all this. Of his Love and Mercy, this he doth, as hath been fore said. And that charging them, with a woe denounced on their failure, to do what they can with *Sheep and Lambs*. And *in*, and *out of season* ; attending *continually on this very thing*. Withal declaring, that he will take contempt of *us*, as contempt of *himself*, and of his *Christ*.

Luke

Luke 10. 16. Thou art a *stone*, and not a *man* if thou needest more *Motives*. For God to come down from the Throne of his *Soveraignty*, and speak *Supplications*, is a wonder not small. For Men to make light of him and his *Grace*, is one truly great. *Nabal* slighted *Dauids* kind *Message*; thou shalt not, I hope, slight this that I deliver thee from thy King and Judge. No, methinks I hear thee taking up *Hazaels* words; Is thy *Reader* a *Dog*, that I should do this thing? I proceed therefore

E. 1. *Reject not this doctrine of Reconciliation, though thou shouldst not yet Believe it.* If thou hast read what hath been said, I cannot much doubt thy *Belief*. But I find it still good, to suppose the worst. Some believed what the *Apostles* preached, and some believed it not. O thou that believest not what I have written, this I desire from thee: Or rather, this God requires from thee; *sc.* That thou abstain from proud *pre-remptory*

remptory concluding, that it must needs be *false*, because thou art not presently perswaded that it is *true*. And that thou admit it to be so much as *doubtful*, if thou canst not yet think it *certain*. Worthy of thy *Enquiry*, if not of thy *Faith*.

I pray thee believe it possible, that thou mayst mistake : And that in this very matter ; wherein a mistake is as dangerous as any where it can be. Consequently, that it imports thee highly, to go pray God to certify thee of the Truth. And in order to thy being certified, to go to the best Friends thou hast, and best Ministers that thou knowest ; and discourse them concerning it ; and hear what they have to offer to thee for or against it. I sadly know that *oftentimes it is but a Wind in the Bowels, that is mistaken for a Child in the Womb* : It stirring and moving so awfully like a Child. I am as warie as I can : But I do, and my Conscience tells me I ought, to speak comfortably

G

fortably to very Enquirers. I have known some *ram* Enquirers become very credible Converts in a few weeks time. And I wonder who ever knew our ignorant sort of people become such by *bare* Hearing, without Enquiring and Consulting. I take it for granted that they receive little or no good from me, if before much time passes they do not come unto me. 'Tis *Collocutory* Preaching that God blesteth to such. And when I have brought any of them unto that, I cannot but hope God intends them a Blessing. Reader, if thou art an Unbeliever, I despair not of thee if thou beest but an Enquirer. Doubting usually precedes Faith, though Faith doth not always follow Doubting.

E. 2. Delay not to set to the work, as soon as ever thou shalt believe the word of Reconciliation. Dost thou already believe it? Thou hast then begun thy business about it, I hope. Thou never dost rightly Believe, till thou dost Act. O let thy Works come

come full speed after thy Faith. Get ability to tell thy God above, and (his Vicegerent,) thy *Conscience within* thee; that from thy first Understanding and Perswasion of the truth of this Doctrine, thou didst as *David*. Make hast, and not delay to keep his Commandments foredeclared. Do not rest, or let thy Minister rest then, one day or hour, till thou knowest the *Covenant of Grace* and *Reconciliation*. Enter thee into it solemnly. Consult for thy preparation for the *Lords Table*; there to confirm it. For why, Delay is worthy of the worst word I have given it in my Sermon on *Ecc. 12. 1*. But now, now an *hours* delay is (in some respects) worse then a *years* delay before. *Understanding and Faith unimproved unto holy Practice*, are the most horrible aggravations of *sinful Practice*. But a Man is in a fair way, as soon as he has took but his first true step toward *Reconciliation*. When he has but sincerely repented

G 2

this

this word ; “ Lord Jesus I will never
 “ be my own while I breathe more ;
 “ I am thine upon thy Gospel terms
 “ for ever ! Be not afraid of the
 pain of this. ’Tis a short one, and
 presently turns to Joy. As the plea-
 sures of sin be short, and quickly
 turn to Plagues. When that is but
 rightly said, the wheels will run in
 all other work.

Hast, hast my Reader. If Physi-
 cians had given thee over for a dead
 Man, wouldst then Delay ? The dy-
 ing people I am called to, be all for
 present Peace with God. The most
 healthful of the Living have full as
 much reason to be for it. O that I
 could not say, I see them otherwise
 minded. I have read of *Indian Pri-
 soners*, chained in golden fetters :
 And I see many English ones, whose
 Estates on Earth allow them not lei-
 sure or liberty for Peace-making
 with Heaven. I tell them in my
 plainness, that the Dogs in *Sicily*
 cannot hunt, because the sweet flow-

ers in every field overcome the scent. And that the sweets of this World in which they live, do spoil their scent and savour of Spiritual things, and keep them from following after their Peace with God. And for *poor people*, how little hast, do all their hardships below, provoke them to make for the Treasure above. *Rich* and *Poor* are, both, in expectation, as they tell us, of Eternal Happiness. Both believe Reconciliation, hereto necessary. But alas, both do not hasten to get it made ; and therefore great is the misery of both upon them.

E. 3. *Let the business of thy Reconciliation have all thy strength spent on it, when thou hast set unto it. Reader, Heard I not thee saying erewhile ; " Here begins my essay of " Reconciliation unto my offended " God ? Thou art at it, art thou not ? If so, the Father of Glory be thy good speed ? But as ever thou expectest him to be so, spare for no*

G 3

pains

pains therein. O what does *require*, or what will *requite* thy pains, if Reconciliation unto God will not ?

Tell me, Man, doth the Gospel bid thee *play*, or *work out* thy Salvation ! And doth it account that to be a Play, or a Work of thine, wherein thou puttest not forth *all* thy strength. All thy *contriving*, and all thy *executing* strength. Verily in Gods esteem, it is idly done, *whatever thou hast not forelaid with best consideration, and brought forth with thy utmost might.* Thou dost but trifle, till it comes to that pass, that thou mayst truly speak thus. “ Of all
 “ things under the Sun my Under-
 “ standing doth consult most ; my
 “ Will doth command most ; my
 “ Practick Powers do put forth
 “ themselves most of all, for my Re-
 “ conciliation with God. I Project
 “ nothing, I Crave nothing, I Labour
 “ for nothing comparably unto it ; or
 “ for any thing, but *reductively* and
 “ *subordinately* unto it. A weak Mind,
 a weak

"a weak Heart, and weak Practick
 "power, I must own mine to be.
 "Weak in themselves, and weak in
 "comparison of many other Christi-
 "ans. But, my Heart in this thing
 "reproaches me not; I am throughout
 "Predominantly for Reconciliation. Nor
 "doth my Mind plod and study, nor
 "my Heart chuse and crave, nor my
 "Hands more follow their work for
 "any thing to be named, than for
 "this Reconciliation. I am sure I do
 "jealously watch my Heart daily.
 "And desire to expend my whole
 "strength in the matter of my Recon-
 "ciliation, which is now my whole
 "Business. I do believe, God's peace
 "is attainable by a restless Devil, as
 "soon as by an idle Man. And it is,
 "and is like to be my care all days of
 "my Life, that God may never hence-
 "forth call me wicked or swathful Ser-
 "vant. In this I will follow Calvin,
 "as Calvin followed Christ.

E. 4. Let a Strength greater than
 thy own be invoked, while thou art spend-
 G 4 ding

ding thy own in the business of Reconciliation. Reader, know'st not thou how in all things to prosper? Come, and Learn! *Be much upon thy knees, then shalt thou succeed in every work of thy Hands.* Of all the works thereof, Reconciliation is the greatest. Wherefore, of all the same, beg the greatest help and aid of God for this. And with the greatest Faith and Fervence beg it. *Prayer, is an Incense made of all Spices; all Graces are Ingredients in it.* Some say, it has more Promises in the word made unto it, than any other Duty hath. I am sure it hath so many made to it, when it is made it self with Faith and Fervour, that it must needs receive whatever it asks. True; *Prayer doth not excuse our Labour.* *Praying, and doing no more, against Iniquity, is it self a black mystery of Iniquity.* God will not have our Sins mortified for us, as *Goliath* was killed for the *Israelites*; we, like them, looking on, but striking not one stroke. But yet

yet good is the *Hebrew Proverb* ;
Without standing Prayer,, the World
could not stand. A World of Pains is
 lost for want of Prayers. In its own
 place ; *Our own Prayer is as necessary*
as God's Power, for our welfare, His
 Power it is, that Works, Upholds,
 Encreases all Good : But our Prayer
 it is, that he will have to fetch it. If
 we will have that his Power, he will
 ordinarily make us come and fetch it
 by Prayer. Indeed, he may Give,
 but we may not *Expect*, before, and
 without our asking. And you shall
 ordinarily find it, especially as to
 sensible returns ; that God measures
 his *Grant of Prayers*, by our care in
 Prayers. And when we exceed in
 our Cares, God exceedeth in his
 Grants.

Reader, do but thus Pray always,
 I will be content to bear thy Curse, if
 thou dost not prosper always. But,
 I will as soon be bound for thy *Natu-*
ral Life without thy Breathing, as for
 thy reconciled one without thy Praying.

Come on, I pray thee, and let thou and I, enter the Holy Order of *Mendicants*; *God's Beggars be richer than Lords and Ladies*. I use to beseech *poor folk*, to let me make them rich; and *rich people*, to let me make them richer. Yea, both to let me make them *Kings and Queens*. And how, thinkest thou? Why by *Marrying and Begging*. I have known those that have enriched themselves more by a happy *Match*, than by all the *Trade* they ever drove in their Lives. Let Souls but Marry Jesus Christ, they shall be sure to do it. Yea, and by *Petitions* granted at *White-Hall*, many have sweetly advanced themselves in this World. Let us both keep *Petitioning and Begging* hard at the Throne of Grace, we shall not fail of Favour and Advancement in a *Higher Court than White-Hall*. Shrink not then, my Reader, but come on, and resolve most resolutely, and say: "O Prayer, I do now see what thou art. And I resolve what
" in

"in all my Life thou shalt be. I will
 "less use *Bread and Salt*, than *Prayer*;
 "and less delightfully, as far as I am
 "able. *Prayer* shall be the *Girdle*
 "compassing all my Affairs; small and
 "great. I will never think any Mer-
 "cy to hang so low, that I may reach
 "it safely enough, without setting up
 "the Ladder of *Prayer*. And as for
 "Mercies of the *Higher Hemisphere*;
 "as for my Reconciliation unto God,
 "that is one and all Mercies; If I
 "forget *Prayer*, let my *Tongue* cleave
 "to the roof of my *Mouth*. For this,
 "with the Trumpet of *Prayer* will I
 "daily Alarm *Heaven*; call God my
 "Saviour to my Succor; and Storm
 "*Hell* to its Terror. Being the En-
 "mies of my Reconciliation cannot
 "be scattered till God arise; and
 "God will not arise, till *Prayer* a-
 "wakes him; *Heaven* shall as soon be
 "without *Angels Praises*, as without my
 "*Prayers ringing there*. In the Mount
 "and Valley, at my best and at my
 "worst, I will *Pray*. *Ephraim* and
 "Ma-

“ *Manasses* were *Brothers*. And
 “ know when I am in *Plenty*, I am in
 “ danger of *Forgetfulness*. But I will
 “ beseech God that I may never know
 “ any *Plenty* but a *Praying* one; or
 “ *Poverty*, but what may encrease my
 “ *Beggery* at his Door. And that
 “ still, whatever it be he spreads my
 “ Table with, I may never come
 “ more hungrily to my *Supper* than to
 “ my *Prayer*. O my Soul, the Door
 “ of *Mercy* stands open continually,
 “ may the Mouth of thy *Prayer* ne-
 “ ver keep shut. And mayst thou never
 “ cease to be *Prayerful*, till God doth
 “ to be *Bountiful*. He is not like the
Tartarian Prince, that would not ad-
 mit the *Chineses* into his presence,
 without their submitting first to an
 hundred Bastinadoes on their Bodies.
 No; at the Court of Heaven they
 are made most welcom, that come to
 Petition. And the greater Blessings
 they do ask, the greater welcom
 they have. Ask a Kingdom, thou
 shalt be more pleasing to God than if
 thou

ad thou beg but a piece of Bread.

E. 5. *For your Life, despise not mens help, while you do drive on Prayer for Gods Grace.* Reader, hearken to a Man that every week sees sad instances. Some poor Souls, awakened unto a like care of their Salvation, do go (as they do tell me) unto their prayers. And, such as they be, do abound indeed in them. Of God, they know little. Of the Covenant of Grace, and its terms on which God will accept them. and on no other, they are ignorant forely. Yea, and many of them, are sensible that they are so; and go about wishing, *O that I did know God better, and what it is he would have me to do!* But they have no Friend unto whom they can get themselves to confess this ignorance, None at least, that is able to instruct them. *Pride* indeed, tho' they name it shamefacedness, makes them keep it to themselves. When any motion of God's Spirit, by *legal Terror*, puts them upon going to
some

some Minister, and opening their Case unto him, *Satan* finds it no hard matter to make them stifle it soon; and this very *often*, and very *long*. Under the Dominion of this *dumb Devil*, some tell me they have been for many *Months*, and some for *Years* together. Though in the mean time they have had shrewd *Conflicts*; and have gone near to gain *Conquest* sometimes. They have gone, and knock'd at Ministers doors with a purpose to confess ignorance and beg instruction; and yet have had their hearts fail; have turned away and not entered into the Houses, but gone back drooping unto their Homes. It is suggested, and soon surmised by them, that Ministers and Friends will *Chide* them, *Shame* them, and *Grieve* them, who think they have Grief enough on their Hearts already. Likewise, that God is the best Teacher and Helper; and can Help and Teach without Friends and Ministers. Vol, and is merciful and ready to do so for
such

such as do pray so much to him as they do. Yea, and will not upbraid neither, as Men will. Hereupon they keep still themselves unto themselves. Make no use of them to whom God has committed the word of *Reconciliation*, for its Dispensation unto them. And given the *Tongue of the Learned*, to speak a word in Season. They hear indeed their Sermons and continued Discourses: But how? Much, they do not understand. Much, they misunderstand. Little, they Remember. Most, or all, they misapply to themselves. Every Threat they hear, they say they must *Despair*. Every promise they hear, their Case is as good as the best they *presume*. Thus are they up and down, like the troubled Sea. To the *Priests Lips*, to the *Ministers Face* apart, they will not go. *Collocutory preaching*, they think, will kill them; be it from Ministers or any Religious Friends. I must not say what I know, of the gain and the joy of many, when their

their proud Stomachs have once come down; and they have consented to bear the smart of its being known what they have been. But I very boldly tell thee, Reader, all that I have met with, have in vain cryed and prayed and expected God's *immediate Teachings*. And have multiplied sins and sorrows by their disuse of his *appointed Teachings* through the Mouths of his Ministers and People. Never lighting into the way of God, or Knowing and Tasting his Goodness, till they had made use of the Counsellors instituted by God for them. And become Companions of such as fear God, Walking with people wise to Salvation, and asking and borrowing Wisdom from them. Leaving and Loathing the Society of vain and vile Creatures, that formerly corrupted and hardened them. Now rejoycing singly in such as do *Instruct, Exhort, Reprove, and Give Examples* of Good.

Others also, God's Holy *Segullas*,
and

and Choice Children (I am perswaded) there are, who sin in this respect. Sound *Converts*, yea considerable *Proficients* in Grace and Peace. Who by one or other Temptation, are turned aside from all Sociableness and Converse with their Brethren. And from a just Freedom of Discourse with their Pastors. Of their Brethren, they seem to think some too much *above* them in Gifts and Graces, for their Communion. Tho' one would think, a poor body should not care how rich his Friends were. They will be the more helpful unto him; will they not? But, alas, these seem to fear, they will be the *more Scornful*, and *less Helpful*. And for others, they appear to judge too much *below* them. Too dull in their Understandings for them to Instruct. Too loose in their Lives, for them to Reclaim. They ought to consider, that the more *dark* their Brethren be, they may the better expect welcom to that small Light they can

can Minister.) And the colder their
 Religious Love is, there's the more
 need of their Bellows whatever they
 are, to blow it up. But this is not
 considered, and Converse with these
 is not maintained. Yea, sadly be it
 said as the very Truth is, Their
 Communion with their Brethren in
 Christ, as such, is next to none.
 However, these so faulty Christians
 persevere in Prayer and Supplicati-
 ons. *Publike, Family, Closet prayers.*
 And even *Exclamatory ones.* But
 these, I even these Souls; praying,
 and praying these, all sorts of prayer;
 these, many, most, and of them (for
 ought I know) have their sore re-
 bukes from on High. Walk about
 with *Hannah's* sorrowful Spirit, for
 their ungranted Suits, as they testi-
 fie, many of them with their own
 Mouths. Long they have walk-
 ed in the dark, seen no light of God's
 reconciled Face, and it has been as
 much as they could do to live, for his
 Terrors upon them. Nor hath he
 ever

ever shone upon their Souls, or spoken
 peace; until they have took ad-
 vice and a better course. Until they
 have shook off their *fullennes*, and
 became *Affable* and *Courteous*. Be-
 lieving it *God's way*, very often to
 utter *his voice* through *Good mens*
mouths. Both *his Teaching*, *Hum-*
bling, and *Comforting voice*. Yea,
 and to make none of his Children,
 so *Fit* as those that are *liberal* to their
 Brothers and Sisters. To *water* none,
 so much as those that *water workers*.
 They themselves do tell me, *God hath*
made their going unto their Godly
Friends, a *sensible going unto him*.
 Their *hearing* of them, a *hearing of him*.
 I, and their *helping* of them, a *migh-*
ty help (of *God's making*) unto
 themselves. In a word, *Uniting* to
 the *Members*, to be *Uniting* unto
 Christ himself the *Head*. They tell
 me, they have at last found, that
 God *speaks* by *Mens Mouths*, and
works by *Mens Hands*. And to ne-
 glect *Ministers*, or *private Christians*
 help,

help, is to neglect God's own help and Grace. Be it then, Reader, an Immortal Maxim with thee and me: *that Religious Friendship with good Men, and mutual Conference, is a means ordained by God, for Assurance and perseverance.* And, let us cherish *humane* Friendship, as most necessary unto *Divine*.

E. 6. *When thou art reconciled, reconcile thy Brethren.* I will be short in this my last Exhortation. In which my meaning is, that you should do your best, to bring your Relations into the state you find good. I know 'tis next to impossible, to Enjoy and not Commend Reconciliation unto ones Children and Household. Directions and Motives I have elsewhere given, and am by promise engaged to send abroad. In this place, I say but this. Good Reader, give it good attention. *Reconciled Souls be all Love.* Souls made after his heart, who has wrote himself by the name of Love. *Love is all Action.* As
well

well thou mayst hold all the four Winds in a bag, as Love in a sleep. For, like Fire, as long as it Lives, it Acts. *Reason, Love, and Religion, is all religious Loves Communication.* These, religious Love is ever dropping, nor hath it more to instill. He that Loves me, must shew it by essays to make me Wiser in my self, more Kind to him and to all Men, more Dutiful unto God. The two former are the *means*, the last is the *end*. Unless these be the daily Exercises of thy Life, there's small appearance of thy *reconciled state*. If thou art in it, thou walkest unworthy of it; making Men justly to *doubt* it, and provoking God most dreadfully to *cloud* it. Remember that I told thee; *if thou hast but small care of thy Families Reconciliation, God seems to have no saving care of thine.*

Reader, The God of Heaven looks down, to see if *any*, in particular if *thou* that art here reading, wilt indeed be Reconciled unto him, or
no!

no! He declares, if thou wilt take hold of his strength, that thou mayst make peace with him, thou shalt make peace with him. If thou wilt not, his Vengeance is ready for those, that for Reconciliation will not be ready. So he commands me once more to tell thee: That if thou hast stood out unto this last Call, thou mayst not also stand out beyond it. If thou dost not, but shalt be by these last Lines perswaded to take Gods offer, the richest Treasures of his Eternal Love shall be thy Remard. If not, the Lord send thee quickly some Lives or Soulds, that he will work by, more then by mine! I know not how to leave thee. And therefore I will add this; if thou dost but so much as fear now thy Unreconciledness; if that Fear of mine become thine own Fear, that Fear of thine will become my Hope. My Hope that Reconciliation work is beginning. But as for many Readers, I will hope them Convert. That have cast them-

themselves down at Gods *Mercy-seat*,
 and humbled themselves at his *Foot-
 stool*. That have turned unto him
 with *full purpose of Heart*, and made
 with him a *solemn Covenant*. That
 have took him to be their *God and
 Father*, and devoted themselves to
 be his *Servants and Children*. That
 have received *Christ Jesus* in all his
Offices, and stand bent to walk with
 him in all his *ways*. And all this up-
 on a holy change of *Judgment and
 Inclination*. Not upon a meer *fright*,
 and new sense, of their (otherwise)
 dangerous *Condition*. I will hope
 that many are *Reconciled* unto God
 truly. That they are got to the end
 of their *Creation*, the *Enjoyment* of
 God. To the end and design of the
Gospel, and its *Ministry*, *Reconcili-
 ation* unto him. That they have at-
 tained unto that of God, which is,
 and will for ever be, *enough*, and
 even *talk* unto them. Enough, in the
absence of *Creatures comforts*, as the
Sun is light enough without *Candles*
 or

or Stars. Enough in the *confluence*
 of *Worldly Troubles* ; as the *Preser-*
 vation of Plate and Jewel is enough,
 when all the *Farthings* in the *House*
 are stolen. I will hope, that many
 are saying most gladly to this effect.
 " There's no *Neutrality*. God is
 " *for* or *against* every Man : And e-
 " very Man either *bates* God, as if
 " he were evil ; or *loves* him more
 " then he allows himself to love his
 " own Soul ! An hour or two agoe,
 " God was my Enemy and I his. Now
 " he Loveth mee, and I Love him.
 " O what a *Hell* am I raised from
 " What an *Heaven* am I raised to.
 " True, I had a *sort of Peace* with
 " God before ; but it was but a *Pre-*
 " *sumption* that I was dropping into
 " Hell with. I had the *evidences of*
 " *Hell* in my *Forehead*, while I had
 " the *dreams of Heaven* in my *Brain*.
 " I had a *sort of Peace* with my Con-
 " science ; but it was but a *Truce*.
 " One, wherein it was all the while
 " pre-

" preparing torments for me. Tor-
 " ments that have, and would have
 " more, filled my *Heart* with an-
 " guish, my *Eyes* with tears, my
 " *Tongue* with complaints. My ease
 " was but that of a *drunken Sleep*,
 " not the true one of *sound Health*.
 " The work of this day, the work
 " of my *Life-time*, yea the work of
 " my *Eternity*, will be to bless and
 " magnifie my *Reconciled God*, and
 " my *Reconciling Advocate*. *Christ*,
 " my *Advocate*, pleading in his own
 " person what he has paid for me.
 " And the *Holy Ghost* my *Advocate*,
 " teaching me to plead it with God,
 " and with my self!

I have read that *St. Jerome* had
 always *Christs* call unto *Judgment*
 ringing in his head. *Reader, Rea-*
der, may his call unto *Reconciliation*
 be ever ringing in thine! One of
 our *English Martyrs* dyed with his
 Pardon by him; he would not ac-

cept it on the *ill terms* whereon it was offered. But O burn thou not in Hell, for not accepting the Pardon that God offers thee ; they are *good terms* whereon his Offers be made. It is wonderfully low that God doth condescend in them. Thou canst not say wherein thou canst desire lower Condescension. 'Tis reported, that a Gentleman once prayed his King to give him leave ; and offered at a dear rate to buy his leave ; to come sometimes into his presence, and cry, *God save the King !* And being asked his reason, made answer, that (whether the King loved him or no,) he should gain enough by it, if, by that means, he gat the report of being beloved much by the King. Great reason there is for our fear, that many Professors do aim at no more. That they enter *Church fellowship*, follow *Ordinances*, open their *Ears* to Sermons, and their *Purses* unto the Preachers ;
and

and all to gain but *the repute of being reconciled* unto God. Not making very Reconciliation it self, their scope and drift ; the *End of their Actions*, and (as then it would be) *the Rule of their Desires*. Reader, say that I warned thee against this most hyperbolical Folly. I beseech thee, *Live for somewhat more than a Lye. For somewhat more than a Name to live, and that a false one also.* Wilt thou not be perswaded ? I pray thee, Man, think a thought or two, of the *short Continuance* of this poor Name it self. Of its very *slight airy and smoky Pleasure*. I, and of its certain *attendant Torments*. For though thou tryest a thousand ways to disarm thy Conscience, thou shalt not avoid it, but shalt ever and anon have wounds that will marr thy Mirth. And give thee *Torments, stronger then thy Delights.*

If all will not move thee : But
 thou hardenest thy Heart against
 all, and art resolute against Recon-
 cilement unto God. What remains,
 but that I say, as a *Pious Matron*,
 once did to a long *Prodigal Son* ?
 To this effect. " You have a long
 " time grieved and plagued my
 " Soul with your sin. I have call-
 " ed, counselled, and begged you
 " to Convert. I have wept, and
 " mourned, and cryed to God night
 " and day. Impatient of the thoughts
 " of your Damnation. But now,
 " being nothing prevails, and I see
 " no hope. Now, I do (as I ought)
 " even sit down content. I, now,
 " consent to thy being Damned.
 " Let God destroy thee, if he please,
 " in his Righteous Fury ; seeing
 " thou wilt not accept of his Re-
 " conciling Mercy. With all my
 " Heart, God do his will with thee.
 It is said, that by these last forth-
 coming Prints of the Mothers heart,

the

the Sons wicked one was broken. That by these words, set home by Gods Spirit, he was Converted and became an eminent Servant of our Blessed Saviour. God give alike efficacy unto these Lines of mine.

Heavenly *Luther* professed that the Article of *Justification* reigned in his Heart: It is the more comprehensive Article of *Reconciliation*, that I wish reigning in the Hearts of all the Ministers and Christians of *England*. Some have called it *the richest Vein in the whole Mine of Gospel treasure*. But (as I hope, I have proved it,) I boldly name it *one and all*. Even, *the whole Mine of Gods Mercy, and the whole Province of Mans Duty*. There are those abroad, who count us *narrow souls*, as many as confine our cares and pains unto this Argument. But *we think we have the Spirit of God*, to whom they pretend not; and *do*

walk at large, while they understand it not. God knows, the Gospel testifies, and the Day will reveal the truth. I conclude with this appeal, made unto all that have but any tolerable Religious eye-sight.

Whether a little Religion does not go a great way, among them who make not Reconciliation their first, middle, and last work?

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